

Short Stories 1851



THE LILY OF THE VALLEY.

BY JAMES H. DANA.

"WHAT an angel!"

"Say rather a lily of the valley!"

The speakers were two young sportsmen in the highlands of Scotland, who, wearied by a long day's shooting, were approaching a hill-side spring, famous in that wild district for the coldness and pureness of its waters. They had just reached the brow of the elevation overlooking the rural fountain, when the sight of a young girl, in the first blush of womanly beauty, sitting by the spring, drew these ejaculations from them in succession. As they spoke they stopped, by a common impulse, to gaze on the fair vision a moment before it should be dissipated, which they knew it would, on their appearance.

The young girl was sitting on a low rock that rose by the side of the fountain, her dimpled elbow resting on the cliff, and her head leaning on her hand. The attitude was one of nature's own choosing, and graceful in the extreme, as all such careless postures are. The figure of the maiden was slight and sylph-like, yet exquisitely proportioned; nor could Canova have modeled a bust of more undulating outline or a rounder and fairer arm. But it was the face that, after all, fixed the young men's attention. A shade of pensiveness hung over it for the time, as if a gentle melancholy took part in the reverie of the young girl; but it was plain to see, from the mirthful blue eye and the dimples of the chin, that the usual expression was one of happiness and glee. Her hair was golden in color, and flowed in natural ringlets down on her shoulders. The small, delicately closed mouth; the nose that rivaled in straightness that of a Grecian Venus; and the clear, brilliant complexion formed together a breathing picture of female loveliness such as no ideal painting could have rivaled.

"See, was I not right?" said the last of the two speakers, in a whisper to his companion. "She has been gathering lilies; there are some still in her hand, and a bunch nestles in her bosom, but only to be outvied by the purity around it."

"Yes, Duncan, she is more than an angel—she is a peerless Scottish lass—a lily of the valley indeed. What a pity so much beauty was not noble-born!"

"Tush!" replied his companion, impatiently;

"Burns says—

"The rank is but the guinea stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that,"

and, to my thinking, a lovely woman is a born countess, at least if she has graces of mind equal to those of person. But let us descend."

He had been leaning carelessly on his gun as he spoke, and now, preparatory to proceeding, threw it to his shoulder. Unfortunately the trigger had caught in a bramble, and the piece went off, the load lodging in his side. He staggered and fell.

"Good heavens!" cried his companion, springing to his side and lifting the wounded man up. "Are you killed? Do you hear me, Donald? Merciful Father," he exclaimed, as he saw no sign of life in his friend, "what shall we do? He is dead, or dying, and no aid to be had for miles."

The young girl we have described had been buried in a profound reverie, but at the report of the gun she started like a frightened bird, looking wildly around to see whence it proceeded. In a moment she caught sight of the wounded man lying on the heather above her, while his friend, kneeling on one knee, supported the head of the sufferer. Immediately that the sportsman saw the girl was watching him, he shouted and waived his arm for help.

When was woman's ear ever deaf to the call of suffering? The timid Scottish maiden, who but a moment before was on the point of flying, now turned and began to ascend the hill-side, fleet and graceful as a young doe.

"My poor friend," said the sportsman, politely doffing his hat as she approached, "has met with an unfortunate accident, and I do not know what to do, or where to bear him."

A deep blush dyed the girl's cheek as she encountered the gaze of a stranger, but it passed off immediately, and, with a presence of mind worthy of one older, she stooped down to see if the wounded man was dead.

The face she beheld was as handsome a manly countenance as the sun ever shone upon; and, perhaps, she thought so, for the blush again came to her cheek. The features were cast in a lofty, almost heroic mould, and were indicative of a character at once firm and elevated, a something above the mere fine gentleman, which was evidently his social rank.

"He breathes still," she said, as she broke off

a delicate leaf from one of her lilies and held it to his nostril: and, looking at his companion, she continued, "do you think you could carry him to the spring?"

The sportsman answered by carefully lifting his friend up in his arms and bearing him down the hill-side, the young girl following.

"Place him here," she said, pointing to the slightly elevated bank, "and lean his head against the rock. Everything depends now on your getting a surgeon soon," she continued. "If you will follow that path to your right, around the turn of the hill, you will find our cabin. There is a pony there, which you can take, and ride to the little town of Abernethy, some five miles off, where, fortunately, a physician may be had. At the cabin you will find a shepherd or two—tell them to bring some bed-clothes and a settee, on which to carry your friend to the house. It is a humble place, but better than the hill-side. By the time you get back with the surgeon we shall have your friend safe in a comfortable bed, and, I hope, doing better."

She spoke with such a quick perception of what was best to be done, and did it so composedly, that the sportsman, who had expected to see her frightened and embarrassed, was lost in admiration, and submitting himself entirely to her guidance, hastened to execute her commission.

When he had vanished around the hill, the young girl took some water in her hands and began to bathe the face of the wounded man. But he still lay insensible. After having persisted in her task for some time, without any signs of life being perceptible, the tears began to fall thick and fast from her lovely eyes.

"Alas," she said, "he is dead! What if he has a mother, or one dearer still. And yet but half an hour ago he was in the full strength of health and manhood. It cannot be—I have heard," she continued, eagerly, as if a sudden thought had struck her, and she began to tear open his vest to get at the wound, "that my grandsire died at Culloden from the blood coagulating in the wound, when, if a surgeon had been by, he might have been saved. What if this should be the case here?"

She had by this time bared sufficient of his person to get at the orifice of the wound. The dark gore had almost stiffened about it. She gazed at it an instant, the tears falling fast in womanly sympathy, and then a sudden idea seemed to strike her. She stooped down, and tenderly approaching the wound with her lips, began to suck the blood away. She had not been long engaged in her task of mercy when the wounded man stirred, and opening his eyes, fixed them earnestly upon her.

She started from her kneeling posture, covered

with beautiful confusion. For awhile the sense of maidenly shame even destroyed her joy at his recovery, and she could not meet his gaze.

"Where am I?" for his memory was yet vague. "What spirit from heaven are you? Ah! I remember—my gun went off. But where is Harry?"

The young girl had now, in a measure, recovered from her embarrassment.

"If you mean your friend," she said, half timidly, and in a voice that sounded to the ears of the sufferer inexpressibly sweet, "he has gone for a physician. I have consented to watch by you till some shepherds come to carry you to our cabin. And here they come, heaven be blessed," she exclaimed, clasping her hands, equally glad to conclude this embarrassing *tele-a-tete*, and to see the wounded man placed in a situation of more comfort.

"Heaven bless you," said the sufferer, with emphasis, giving her a look which brought the blushes again to her countenance. "You have saved my life."

In a few moments the wounded man was placed on a settee brought by the shepherds, and the little cavalcade wended its way toward the cabin. The maiden walked last, and by her side stalked sadly the two dogs of the sufferer; and the dumb animals, with a sense almost human, as if appreciating her kindness to their master, looked up affectionately into her face every few steps.

The cabin was like those existing everywhere in the Highlands, a rude but cheerful habitation, but was both larger than usual, and adorned with more taste inside. The wounded man, as he was borne into an inner chamber, of which the house had apparently at least two, noticed, with some surprise, over the fire-place, an old fashioned target and broad claymore.

In about two hours the friend of the sufferer returned, bringing with him the physician. The surgeon was closeted with his patient for more than an hour, and when he came forth the young girl was still awake, sitting anxiously by the fire, in company with a middle-aged woman, the wife of one of the shepherds.

"Oh! Miss Helen," said the old physician, answering the inquiry of her eyes, "you have saved the life of as braw a lad as ever shot a muir-cock or stalked a red-deer. I know all about it, ye see, lassie;" then seeing that Helen was ready to cry with sheer vexation, he continued: "But its in the bluid, its in the bluid; ye came of a generous and gallant race," and he patted her head as a father would that of a favorite daughter, adding, as if to himself, "its a pity the Southron has the broad acres that were once her ancestor's; and that she, coming of a chieftain's line, should have nothing but a

cabin and a few bits of hill-side for a flock or two of sheep."

Helen did not hear these last remarks, for the old man spoke in a whisper, and she had risen, now that she knew the result, to retire, for she feared the other young sportsman would come out.

"Good-bye, doctor," she said, giving her hand with the dignity of a countess, softened by the kindness of an affectionate girl. "What you tell me will make me sleep better. I share good Mrs. Colin's bed to-night, having given up my own room to the sick man; but, if you will rest here to-night, we will yield it to you and sit by the fire."

"Nae, nae," said the old man, kindly pushing her toward the door of the other sleeping room; "I stay here indeed, for I maun be wanted: but I'm an old campaigner, and hae slept mony a night under my cloak, with the bonny stars above me; and, to such as me, a settle and a chimney corner is nae great cross now and then."

The next day the wounded man was pronounced better, but still in a very critical situation; and his removal was expressly forbidden by the old surgeon.

"Ye maun keep him here, awhile yet, lassie," he said, addressing Helen, "and, I'm a'most persuaded, ye'el hae to be his nurse. He has nae sisters, or mother to send for, it seems; and men are very rough nurses, ye ken. Mrs. Colin's here will, nae doubt, help; but ye maun be his nurse, maist of the time, yeerself. Aweel, aweel, don't look frightened; it's what can't be helped."

And so Helen, timid and embarrassed, was compelled, from the urgent necessity of the case, to attend on the wounded man. His friend, indeed, remained to assist in nursing him, but the invalid, with the whim of a sick man, soon came to refuse his medicines, unless administered by the hand of Helen and sweetened by her smile. Moreover, until the danger was over, his friend watched every night at his bedside, and requiring a portion of the day, in consequence, for rest, Helen was necessarily left alone, for hours, with the wounded man. The surgeon, for the first two weeks, came every day to see his patient, but, after this, visited him less frequently.

"He is getting along weel enough now," he said, one day, when Helen followed him out of the room, to ask his opinion. "All he needs is carefu' nursing, such as ye ken weel how to gie him. Ah, lassie," he continued, smiling archly, and shaking his grey head, "I would, mysel', be a'most willing to be on a sick-bed for a fortnight, if I could hae two such eens watching me."

It was not long after this, for he now mended

rapidly, that the invalid began to sit up and very soon he could totter to the window, and look out. In a day or two more he found his way to the cottage door, where, sitting in a chair, he inhaled the delicious mountain air, for an hour or so at noonday. His friend, when the invalid was thus far convalescent, took to his gun again, and went out for game: and so Helen and her guest were frequently left alone together.

It is not to be supposed that this intimacy, between two congenial spirits, could go on without love, on one side at least.

"How shall I ever thank you sufficiently, Helen?" said Donald, one day, looking at her fondly. "I have never dared to allude to it since, though I have thought of it fifty times daily; but your presence of mind when I was dying by the spring, saved my life."

The blushing Helen looked down, and began to pick to pieces a lily of the valley, her favorite flower; but she answered softly,

"Don't talk that way, Mr. Alleyne," she said. "You would not, I know, if you were aware how much it pained me."

"Call me Donald," said the convalescent, "surely we have known each other long enough for you to drop that formal name. Or, if you will not call me Donald, then I shall address you as Miss Graeme."

"Donald, then," said Helen, archly, looking up, and shaking the curls back from her face.

"Bless you for the word, Helen," he said, taking her hand. "Do you know it sounds sweeter now than I ever thought it would. Nay, dear one, do not withdraw your hand—do not look away—for I love you, Helen, as I love my own life, and, if you will not be mine, I shall ever be miserable. It is this, too, that I have been long wishing to say to you, but never dared."

And did not Helen return the love thus warmly expressed? Had she been with him so much not to know how immeasurably superior he was to other men? Why did she, in fact, shake her head and persist in withdrawing her hand.

"Mr. Alleyne," she said, though with averted face, for the tears were falling fast from her eyes—she no longer said Donald—"if you would not have me keep out of your sight forever—if, in short, you have any respect for a friendless girl—do not speak in that strain again." And she rose as if to depart.

"Helen, for heaven's sake hear me," said her lover, detaining her, "hear me only for one word more. Since the hour that you saved my life I have loved you, and every day I have spent in your society has increased that love; but, if you will say that you love another, I swear never to speak on that subject again."

She endeavored to detach her hand, which he had caught a second time, but he held it too firmly. She still looked away, weeping, but did not answer.

"You are rich, I am poor," she said, at last, brokenly, "you would some day repent of this thing. Even your friends would laugh at your folly."

"Then you love me," eagerly said he. "Is it not so?"

But, this time, Helen faced him, and with a dignity that quite awed his rapture.

"Mr. Alleyne, you will let me go. I am an unprotected girl, and you presume on my situation."

"No, by heaven's, no," he exclaimed. But he let go her hand, "there, leave me, cruel one. You misjudge me, indeed, Miss Graeme, for your blood is as good as mine; and even if it were not, Donald Alleyne is not the man to love for rank or wealth."

Helen, whose pride rather than heart had spoken, was moved by these words, and she lingered irresolutely. Her lover saw the change in her demeanor, and hastened to take advantage of it. Nor did Helen long continue to resist his pleadings. She loved him, indeed, only too well, as she had, all along, confessed to her own heart. Still, even when brought to half acknowledge that he had a place in her heart, she would not promise to be his, without a condition. He argued long and earnestly, but her answer was always the same.

"We must part for a year. You think now, with the memory of your illness fresh upon you, that you love me; but I am come of too haughty a blood, though poor now, to marry even where I might love, on such a sudden, and questionable—excuse me, for I must speak plainly—such a sudden and questionable attachment. You are rich, fashionable, and with influence; I am the last of a line proscribed ever since Culloden. Your place is the gay world, where you will be surrounded by troops of friends; mine is in the humble cabin, where a few poor dependants have been my only companions, ever since my father died. If you really love me, you will return at the end of the year; and if you forget me," her lips quivered, but she went on, "if you forget me, I shall live here, with the heather and muir-cock as I have lived before."

Her lover was, therefore, compelled to submit. But, think you, he honored, or adored her less for her resolution? No, he worshipped her the more for it. There was a proud independence in her banishment of him which became, he said to himself, the daughter of chieftains who had fought at Bannockburn and Flodden Field, and sacrificed their all at Culloden.

Two weeks from that time Donald and his friend left the Highland cabin, and Helen was alone. Never before had she known what it was to be really alone. She missed the presence of that manly form, the light of that manly eye, the deep tones of that manly voice continually. She never knew how much she loved till her lover was away.

But even a year will pass, and, just a twelve-month from Donald's departure, Helen sat, at the spring side, which she had named for the trysting-spot, if her lover proved faithful. She had been there already for many hours, watching with an eager, timid heart, half trembling at her own folly in expecting him, half angry with herself for her doubts; but now, as the gloaming came on, yet no Donald appeared, her bosom swelled nigh to bursting. She rose frequently, and looked up the bridle-path, but nobody was in sight. At last the stars began to come out; the wind grew chill; and, with an almost broken heart, she rose to return to the cabin. Her tears were falling fast.

"I might have known this," she said, sadly. "Do not all my books tell me the same? Ever the old story of trusting woman and deceiving man."

At this instant, an arm was thrown around her waist, and a well-remembered voice whispered in her ear—

"Now, Helen dear, one of our cruel sex, at least, is falsified. I thought to steal on you unawares and surprise you; and so went round by the cottage to leave my horse there. Had you looked behind, instead of before, you would have frustrated my little scheme, by seeing me coming up the gloaming."

What could she say? She said nothing, but burying her face on his shoulder, wept glad tears.

"I have waited, a whole year, impatiently for this day," said he, "thank God I find you mine at last."

A month from that time Sir Donald Alleyne introduced his bride to his ample domains in England; and never had a fairer wife entered the splendid halls of his ancestors.

In the great gallery of the castle is a picture of a young Scottish girl, with a half pensive face, sitting by a mountain spring; and the old housekeeper, as she goes the rounds with visitors, pauses before the portrait to say—

"That is the likeness of the last Lady Alleyne, and lovely she was, and as good as lovely. She was always called by her husband, the late baronet, the lily of the valley. Why, I have never heard."

But you have, reader; and, if you should ever visit Alleyne Castle, you will have no need to be told the tale again.

THE MINISTER'S DAUGHTER.

BY ELLA RODMAN.

THE principal house in Glenwood was a handsome, showy-looking edifice, standing back a short distance from the road, and looking extremely proud and aristocratic as it peeped forth in white glimpses from the dark evergreens which surrounded it. There was a large building in the centre, with a corresponding wing on each side; each furnished with a wide balcony, around whose pillars twined the jessamine and passion-vine in graceful luxuriance. At the end of each balcony a door opened into the principal building, and long, wide windows descended to the ground. There were no flower-beds in front, arranged in set-looking squares and triangles, nothing but the smooth, close-shaven lawn; but back of the house a beautifully laid out garden of large extent was just visible through the thickly-planted trees.

This mansion was the parsonage, and as different as possible from the usual low-browed dwelling, half buried in trumpet creepers and climbing roses; it was a place that naturally called up visions of glittering plate and sleek-looking, well-fed carriage horses, for Mr. Canfield was not one of those who consider themselves "passing rich with forty pounds a-year." He would not, perhaps, have been much better off had he been obliged solely to depend on the stipend received from his not over-generous congregation; but possessing a handsome private property of his own, he merely smiled at all efforts of disinterested friends to rouse some signs of anger in him at this niggardliness, and bestowed the whole sum in charity.

It was a bright, glowing summer's evening, when the sun sinks almost imperceptibly to rest amid clouds of gold and purple, and a gentle wind had begun to stir the evergreens that swayed to and fro like dark shadows of unrest. Two persons were seated in a large parlor of the parsonage, quite taken up with their respective occupations. The thin white curtains that drooped over the windows were waving in the breeze—the gentleman's pen travelled over his paper—the lady's slender fingers stitched away with unabated diligence at the cunning-looking little apron, that, beneath her skilful hands, was rapidly acquiring a shape and an air—and neither seemed to recollect that people can talk and do other things at the same time. There were several fine pictures upon the walls, there were one or two bronze

images holding candles, several small pieces of sculpture, that came forth from the rough marble beneath a brighter sky and a warmer sun, and on the table elegantly bound books—an examination of whose contents proved that beauty was not with them confined to the bindings.

The minister sat at a small writing-desk, inlaid with mother-o'-pearl; his beautiful forehead, from which the dark hair had been hastily pushed aside, was now traced with the lines of thought. Mr. Canfield was an elegant, intellectual-looking man, who would have been distinguished any where; but among the every-day people of Glenwood he shone as something brightly superior. "Aunt Emily," as she sits there quietly plying the everlasting needle, has something extremely lady-like and attractive in her appearance; she is quite pretty still, and much younger-looking than she really is, which, being aunt, and almost sole guardian to such a wild, little, motherless flock as the young Canfields is something of a marvel. Mrs. Canfield died more than two years ago, and during that time Aunt Emily has certainly had her hands full; the persuasive entreaties of the children, and the "do stay with us, dear Emily," of her widowed brother-in-law having due effect, she was to her motherless nieces and nephews a mother in everything except the name. Her work unconsciously slipped from her hands as she fixed her eyes upon the carpet in deep meditation; and so they remained until her brother-in-law, having finished his sermon, observed her wrapt contemplation, and began to wonder what she was thinking about.

"Emily," said he, at length, "are you not yet familiar with the pattern of that carpet? What can you be thinking of?"

"I have been thinking," said she, suddenly, as if speaking her thoughts to herself, "I have been thinking how strange it is that people will not let us alone, but take so much pains to trouble us with silly, unfounded reports. It is surprising that they will not leave us in quiet."

"It would be still more so if they did," was his reply, while a quiet smile lurked about the corners of his mouth. "But Emily," continued her brother-in-law, "you have not yet told me the nature of these reports. I always like to know what people say of me, but not being a Yankee, I might guess all night in vain. Who is it they abuse? you, or me, or both of us together?"

"It is not exactly abuse," replied Emily, with a smile, "but they accuse me of intending to assume a much nearer relation to you and the children than the one I now occupy. Such reports," she continued, calmly, "are annoying from their very unfoundedness, and, of course, Edward, you will put a stop to them whenever you have an opportunity."

"Very annoying indeed, as you have justly observed, Emily," said Mr. Canfield, gravely, "and I know but one way of silencing them; by doing at once what they suspect us of intending to do, we shall soon put a stop to idle reports."

Poor Emily! she thought that she had dismissed the idea forever, when, years ago, on seeing her more fortunate sister win the heart she had scarcely aspired to in her venerated love, she concealed the secret in her own bosom, and no one even suspected it; and she had grown so calm, and learned to view him in a more brotherly light; but at these unexpected words the color flew into her face, and she looked as confused as the veriest school girl.

"Yes, dear Emily," continued the pleading voice, as Mr. Canfield seated himself close beside her, and took the hand which lay passively in her lap, "you must now listen to a little story. Years ago a youth, thoughtless, vain, and self-reliant, went to a house where he saw two fair sisters, who appeared to him the embodiment of all that was bright and beautiful. There was a great personal resemblance between the two, but their natures were essentially different. The elder was gay, sprightly, brilliant, with a flattering manner peculiarly calculated to win the heart of a vain, thoughtless youth; while you, Emily, were ever shy and distrustful of self; always retreating to the background, it required long and intimate acquaintance to discover the talents and virtues which you sought to hide. We were married, and you came to live with us; each day unfolded to me some new, unperused leaf in your character, and I loved Catharine best when her manner was most like you. I say this now, Emily, and to you—yet I dwell on the memory of the lost Catharine with love and respect, for she was a kind, faithful, devoted wife, and it is to her motherless children that I now ask you to become guardian—to fill the void in my widowed heart. You will not refuse me, Emily?"

"Aunt Emily" at two and thirty, saw offered for her acceptance the love which had been as the bright, far-off dream of her youth; and as old associations came crowding upon her mind, she wept silently. Edward Canfield too thought of his youth, and pressing still closer the small hand which lay in his, he pleaded his wants, his loneliness, but above all his deep, unchanging love.

And Emily?—she looked up at length with tearful eyes, as she said: "I willingly consent, Edward, to take upon myself the duties of a wife—*your* wife; but the children? Will they be pleased to see their Aunt Emily elevated to their own mother's vacant place?"

"*The children!*" he replied, "do they not already love you as their mother?" and he led her toward the large glass doors opening on the garden. It was a beautiful scene; the winding walks were bordered with clustering shrubs, through which the bright heads of flowering plants were just visible; the air came loaded with their perfume, and played with the bright locks of the group who were revelling in the very spirit of fun and enjoyment on the lawn beneath the windows. A large, sober-looking Newfoundland dog paraded up and down, to the great amusement and edification of the little party, for on his back was mounted a pretty young hoyden of fourteen, whose countenance expressed the most mischievous satisfaction. A little, curly-headed thing of five years old stood sending forth the merriest peals of laughter at her sister's elevation; while two boys were busily employed with a couple of pet rabbits.

Kate Canfield's was a face of great beauty, with a nose sufficiently *retroussé* to give a most arch expression, which varied with every passing thought; but energy and determination were visible even at this early age. "Aunt Em!" she called out with a merry laugh, "do you not admire my pony? I had considerable trouble to catch him, I can assure you, but I was *determined* to get on his back, and here I am."

The energetic tone in which these words were pronounced called forth a smile from both father and aunt; and the little, curly-headed Eve, running toward them, exclaimed: "Aunt Emily! stoop down your head, I want to whisper in your ear—you have given me but one kiss to-day."

"Aunt Em!" called out the boys, "look at these rabbits—did you ever see such beauties?"

Mr. Canfield smiled archly as he whispered: "the children, I am sure, will all vote for you." And Aunt Emily smiled too with a warm, bright glow of happiness which she had not felt in years.

"Catharine," said Mr. Canfield to his daughter, as the two stood in his study that evening, "I am going shortly to give you a mother; one whom I am sure you will love and respect—your Aunt Emily. Are you not glad, my daughter?"

"Very glad indeed, papa," was the reply, as Catharine opened her bright eyes still wider.

"I have a few words to say, Kate," continued her father, "to which I hope you will pay particular attention. I not only love your Aunt Emily, but have the highest respect for her character and principles, as well as admiration for a

sweetness of temper which I have never seen ruffled. You are thoughtless, Kate, and often inadvertently wound where you do not mean to give offence, but remember that the least disrespect or want of affection shown toward Aunt Emily—your *mother*—will be regarded by me in the same light as though it were meant for myself. But I trust that nothing of this kind will ever occur. And now good night, my daughter," said he, in a tone of thrilling tenderness, as he stooped and pressed his lips on her brow, "may God forever bless and keep you from all shadow of harm."

The substance of Kate Canfield's thoughts that night was as follows: "I had as lief have Aunt Emily for a step-mother as any one else. She is very kind now, to be sure, but I wonder if she will always be so, and let *me* ride on Carlo, and go off when and where I please. Some step-mothers are terribly cross, I know; if she is not, I shall love her dearly—if she is, of course I cannot be expected to care much about her." In ten minutes Kate was asleep.

The autumn winds had strewn the garden paths with dying leaves, and the trees around the parsonage seemed like ruins of the past, all save the dark and deathless evergreens, when Edward Canfield, the widowed minister, again breathed those vows which fifteen years since he had pledged to another. The wedding was quiet and unostentatious; Kate had almost forgotten the meaning of the ceremony, and surveyed her white dress and Aunt Emily's appearance with perfect complacency; until as the concluding words fell upon her ear, and the bride leaned fondly on the arm of her new-made husband, a quick, electric thrill darted through her heart, and she felt a keen sensation of jealousy, a feeling of anger that another had superceded her in her father's love—the *wife* was nearer than the daughter.

Emily started at the cold, chilling kiss with which her daughter saluted her, and a tear dropped unheeded as she stooped down to return the warm greeting of the little Eve, who whispered sweetly: "mother!—will you really be my own, own mother?"

"I will, indeed—so help me, heaven!" she murmured, in a tone of deep reverence.

People were more surprised than they had ever been in their whole lives before. The merest rumors had been whispered around, the faintest hints thrown out, and without allowing time for the usual gradations of a report, without waiting for the scarcely whispered surmises to assume the appearance of certainty, the wedding had suddenly taken place, and "Aunt Emily" was quietly established as Mrs. Canfield without the least bustle or parade. They disliked to see

things done in such a hurry—it did not look well. And so the good people grumbled and complained, until they made the discovery that there was still something to wonder at, to speculate upon, and draw surmises forthwith. The aunt had become the step-mother; that much suspected, never satisfactory being; and with respect to the children, they were not at all sure that this change was for the better. Aunt Emily had always been kind, affectionate, and beloved; but people altered amazingly under such circumstances; and moved by the most disinterested zeal for her welfare, they watched diligently for the least appearance of "airs" in the minister's lady, took strict note of all that occurred at the parsonage, and were particularly interested for the "poor motherless children." No signs of neglect, however, were visible in the appearance of Aunt Emily's charges; their attire was quite as neat as formerly, and the dress of the minister's lady was as simple and unpretending as had been that of the maiden aunt. They sought in vain for a subdued expression in the merry eye of the hoyden Kate, for a look of woe in the bright, round face of little Eve; while every Sunday after service there was a clustering of little heads around the step-mother, and dimpled hands grasped her fingers, and bright, young faces, glowing with love and smiles, were uplifted to hers; they would not do *this* because they were *told to*—they could not remember all *this* by note. So people were in a fair way of being disappointed.

Little Eve said she was sure they were all a great deal happier since Aunt Emily became their mother; she was so kind to them, and told them such pretty stories, and now every night they said their prayers at her knee, as they used to with their own mother, and they loved her more and more every day.

And Emily too was happy; happy in her husband's love, happy in the love of her adopted children, and happy in the love which she scattered on those around her. She had some trials, as who has not? All was not quite smooth and clear before her, and at times, she felt a weight upon her heart when she thought of Kate. From the first she had not appeared to possess the full love of her eldest niece, there had been a holding-back, a sort of distrust on the part of the step-daughter; there was nothing to complain of, no disrespect or appearance of dislike—but there was not an entire confidence. As the child advanced to girlhood, there was a mystery about her which Emily could not fathom. Her character was that of a romp, and yet she acted at times most strangely out of character. She had generally a wild exuberance of spirits; seeming quite to overflow with mirth and gaiety, and yet

at times she would wander off to some secluded spot, whose only attraction was its entire solitude. Cold in manner, even toward her father, she lavished tenderness on no one save the little Eve, who, like some bright cherub, seemed to unlock the hearts of all.

The minister too could scarcely comprehend his daughter; her mischievous propensities appeared to have given way to the love of study, and he often found her bending over the heavy volumes in his library, sometimes catching the last rays of the declining sun, while all within was buried in a misty twilight. She was an accomplished linguist and musician, and stray scraps of paper, which had fluttered in the minister's path, revealed to him a mind of no common order. Sometimes he smiled at the lines—they were just what might have been expected from a young, talented, enthusiastic girl, who did not exactly know what to do with herself; and sometimes he carried them to his study, to peruse again at his leisure, for he could not entirely comprehend them. Kate was quite ignorant of her treasures being thus at the mercy of the wind, and borne to the very last place where she would have had them sent—her father's hands. Had she known this, she would have endeavored to overcome an inconvenient habit of flying off in the midst of one occupation to attend to another; for she was conscious that her verses were sometimes what matter-of-fact people term "high-flown," and like most warm, impulsive geniuses, without much ballast, she had a mortal dread of ridicule. But her father kept his discoveries to himself; and she scribbled on, little thinking whose eye perused her glowing words.

Kate Canfield had arrived at the age of sixteen; that age when a girl has a particular dread of being considered a child, and a great desire to be called a woman. Emily's own good sense taught her that to allow Kate the privileges of a full grown woman, and bring her forward into society several years too old for her, would be committing a very foolish and inexcusable act, and her husband quite agreed with her. Kate, too proud to associate with "the children," and having but few companions of her own age, wandered off more than ever, and her poems became more and more of the sentimental order. Although no one ever supposed it, her nature was capable of the deepest, most absorbing love; this had been all bestowed on her father, whom she regarded with a veneration affection; capable of appreciating his fine mind, he appeared to her a sort of idol to whom she paid homage with a proud, jealous feeling of love and admiration. Forgetting her own altered manner, she now accused him of coldness, and her jealous observation convinced her that the second wife had

entirely obliterated all interest in the children of the first. Her freedom was unrestrained as ever; she went out and in when she pleased, she spent her time entirely as she chose, with only a gentle hint now and then from her step-mother on the wisdom of improving as it flies what can never be re-called, and yet she was dissatisfied. She felt in her own mind that she was a woman, she concluded that she had put away all childish things; she had quite given up riding on dogs, she endeavored to descend the stairs with a grave, elderly pace, and she no longer countenanced romps of any description; yet for all this, her step-mother considered her but as a child—her father ditto—and there was no keeping up her dignity. Emily had gently remonstrated when she saw these pretty, shining curls brushed out quite straight, and braided around a comb, but Kate was determined not to wear her hair any longer curled like a baby; and, concluding that in such a trifle it was wisest not to bring in the aid of authority, the step-mother yielded the point.

It was a warm summer's evening, and the glass doors opening upon the garden, had been thrown wide open to admit the air. Mr. Canfield and Emily were seated on a couch that had been wheeled forward to catch the breeze; one arm was thrown caressingly around the wife, upon whose lap lay a sleeping infant, and the other hand rested on the child, whose little fingers had tightly closed upon it. The moonbeams were streaming in—reflecting the grape leaves distinctly upon the balcony in a tracery of silver net-work, and throwing out in strong relief the figures of the two who sat there in the moonlight. No lamp had been lighted in either apartment; the moonbeams rested here and there in bright masses, making darker still those objects on which they fell not, and at one of the windows of the inner room, Kate's slender figure leaned back against the moulding, while she cast from time to time an earnest glance on the group before her. It was an apt illustration she thought of their two different paths: they sat there with the light falling on and about them; the light of the moonbeams without, and the sunshine of love in their own hearts within; while she, alone, unnoticed, crouched there in the gloom and shade.

She arose and went toward them. Her light footsteps on the summer matting made no sound, and gliding to the far end of the balcony, which the clustering vines made almost dark, she wound her arms about one of the pillars, and resting wearily against it, silently contemplated the trio.

"Emily," said Mr. Canfield, "do you not remember that in those beautiful pictures of Frederica Bremer's, there is a striving after peace and quiet, a calm and holy feeling of con-

tent, which, after a struggle with worldliness, and wild heart impulses, falls at length upon the weary soul like a mantle descended from heaven? I too have felt those struggles, Emily—but now I am at rest; I have begun a new existence. My restless spirit has folded its wings upon your bosom, content to remain ever thus.”

Emily gazed earnestly upon the sleeping face of her child—her own, and then, laying her hand on his, murmured fondly: “And whither thou goest I will go; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.”

Kate could see the look of love that each bent upon the other, and with a full heart she whispered to herself, as she glided away unnoticed as before: “His love is all lavished on *them*—he has now all that he desires with him—what should he care for his first-born, motherless children?”

The next day, in searching a book of travels, Mr. Canfield found a piece of paper containing lines which had evidently been written by Kate the night before. Hastening to her room with a lonely, uncared-for feeling, she had tried to interest herself in the book before her, but other thoughts would come rushing into her mind; and writing them hastily down, she left the paper in the book where she had found it, and the next day it was carried back to the library without a thought of what she had written in it. With a pained, and self-reproaching heart, Mr. Canfield read as follows:

“I am sitting alone in my silent room, into which the moonbeams glance brightly as if mocking the darkness within my heart. Alone, and yet not alone—for there are with me thoughts which rise up with their gloomy faces, like storm-spirits in a restless sea, and I would put them aside, and be alone if I could, but I cannot. I heard *him* to-night when he knew not that I drank in each uttered word, and he spoke of peace, beautiful peace, that falls upon the soul after weary conflicts. Father! I too have pondered over the works of Frederica Bremer, but not mine the selection of those serene, cooling passages—I looked for something to answer the storm in my own breast, and I read of conflicting passions that tore and rent the heart of the victim like the work of some malignant fiend. I draw aside the curtain and gaze upon the clear, evening sky, but it looks too placid—its serenity falls chillingly upon my restless soul. I can remember snatches of poems and legends, learned and treasured when a child, of angel-faces, with their deep, earnest eyes, gazing out from the parted clouds on the objects of their love and care who lingered still on earth. Mother!—angel, spirit mother!—do you ever gaze thus upon your child? There is an empty void in my aching heart which yearns for love—I am alone

upon the earth, for other claims have wound themselves about my father's heart, and I am a wanderer—an outcast. I have loved thee, worshipped thee, my father! ah! do I not still? but I am kept aloof, banished from thy heart. The good-night kiss falls coldly on my brow, not warmly as it used to, and I can only weep in secret. The little Eve lies buried in unconscious slumber, and as I gaze upon the dimpled face I feel that I have something still to love—but ah! it is not the love I crave—a something to which I can look up with a sort of worshipping affection. I wonder if the spirits of the dead ever re-visit their former haunts? I wish I could believe in their existence—I wish that at night, as in the stories I have read, the form of my lost mother would come to my bedside and whisper kind words of peace and comfort. I should not fear—oh, no! for it would be a friendly spirit, and I have no mother—I cannot call *her* mother, for *has* she not robbed me of my father's love?”

The father almost wept as he read this outpouring of a lonely heart; he reproached himself with coldness and unkindness to his beautiful, talented Kate, and thought that it might be even as she had complained, that in his new affections and enjoyments he had overlooked the claims of his motherless children. The paper he locked carefully up in his escritoire; and seeking his daughter, he led her into the shaded garden walks, and they walked through the secluded paths, and he talked to her kindly and affectionately as he had been wont to do, till the tears stood in Kate's beautiful eyes, and she gazed upon him, with the sunrays resting on his noble features, as upon some bright being from another sphere.

That night the little Eve went to sleep with her curly head resting on her father's shoulder, Kate was beside him with one hand tightly grasped in hers, the two boys had placed themselves at his feet, and on the other side sat the step-mother, gazing upon the group with looks of the most perfect love and kindness. Surely the daughter might have been satisfied with the absence of all jealousy on the part of the wife, but she had learned to look upon her with distrust, and that, once admitted, is not easily banished. Kate could not complain of coldness as her father kissed her after evening prayers; he laid his hand upon her head with a blessing, as he had often done, and she slept the sweet sleep of contentment and happiness.

Her father's heart had now returned to her; she no longer felt jealousy of her mother and half-sister; and whole delightful days were spent in the minister's study, in which he diverted her mind to a more healthful channel than the morbid sentimentalism which had seemed to

possess it. Her father was at times quite startled by the depth and earnestness which lay beneath her character; she appeared suddenly to have emerged into the strong-minded woman, and he often deferred to her opinion in a manner that pleased her with the idea that she was no longer a child. She seemed to move in a new existence; buoyed up with the idea that she was now the first object with her father, she presumed upon it in a manner that often gave pain to Emily, although manifested in trifles that escaped the notice of Mr. Canfield.

Kate Canfield had yet a sore lesson before her. She had never yet placed herself in actual opposition to her step-mother—there had as yet been no encounter between them for the mastery, Emily's gentle spirit always urging her to yield on the least appearance of a controversy. But Emily, although mild and yielding, had also a proper self-respect; and her dignity as a wife and mother forbade her submitting to the improper whims of a mere girl. On the evening in question, Kate had persisted in dragging the little Eve out into the night air, against the judgment and wishes of her step-mother.

"I think that I am the best guardian of my own sister!" exclaimed Kate, with haughty emphasis, "no danger of my taking her in any improper place. Come, Eve, will you go with me, dear?"

"Come here, Eve," said Emily, in a calm tone, though her voice slightly trembled, "listen to me, dear child; you would not go out in the damp when mamma does not think it best? She is afraid her little Eve will take cold."

"I will stay with mamma, sister," said the child, as she nestled close to Emily, "but you stay with us too, and we can walk to-morrow."

"Your father, my dear Kate," continued Emily, in a gentle tone, "requested me to become a mother to his children, and I should not be fulfilling my duty were I to allow them to expose themselves to danger or sickness."

"I will speak to my father myself!" exclaimed Kate, with flashing eyes, "and ask him if I am always to be treated like a child! I will tell him!"

"Your father stands here, Kate," said Mr. Canfield in a stern tone, "not to hear unjust complaints, but to command you to ask your mother's pardon for such shameful and unjustifiable conduct."

"I cannot express a sorrow which I do not feel," replied Kate, decisively.

"Follow me to my study then," said her father, in a tone of command, "and give at least some explanation of this conduct."

Kate silently obeyed; and as soon as they were alone, burst forth with a relation of her injuries

ever since his marriage with her aunt; she did not now conceal her feelings of jealousy and loneliness, hoping that her father would take up her cause.

But Mr. Canfield heard her to the end without interruption, and then replied in a tone of grave displeasure: "Three years ago, Kate, in this very room, I told you that any disrespect or want of affection toward your aunt, I should regard as though meant for myself. In this light I consider your conduct of to-night, and until you have made a suitable apology to your mother, I shall regard you as a froward and rebellious child. The fault is entirely your own; your father's wife is the proper mistress of the house and guardian of the children—and you had no right to interfere, especially when it showed such a want of prudence as in the present instance."

Kate turned as pale as ashes during this address. He had then actually decided against her, pleaded her step-mother's cause instead of her own, and now commanded her to make an apology. "Never!—she would leave the house first!" and gliding to her own room, she threw herself upon the bed in an agony of grief and anger. The warm kiss of her little sister first aroused her, and having put the child to bed, she seated herself by the window, and began to ponder over her situation.

The lighter shades of evening deepened into midnight, and still Kate sat there. A crisis had occurred which till then never entered into her thoughts, and she found herself banished from her father's presence as a headstrong, erring child. She would not submit to this treatment! She would prove to them that she was not a child. Her father's roof no longer offered a desirable shelter, and gliding softly about not to disturb the sleeping Eve, she proceeded to execute a plan which had hitherto floated vaguely through her brain. Her father no longer cared for her, her step-mother had embittered her home, and she would carve out her own way—trust to her own exertions, and show them that she too could be independent. A letter was hastily written to her father, some necessary articles of clothing gathered together, and in the early morning she seated herself by the sleeping child, weeping bitterly as she covered cheek and brow with her passionate kisses.

The little Eve suddenly opened her eyes, and Kate whispered sadly, "farewell, Eve, darling! will you remember me when I am gone? Do not let them make you forget Sister Kate."

"Do not go, sister," replied the child, sleepily, "stay here—for I want you with me."

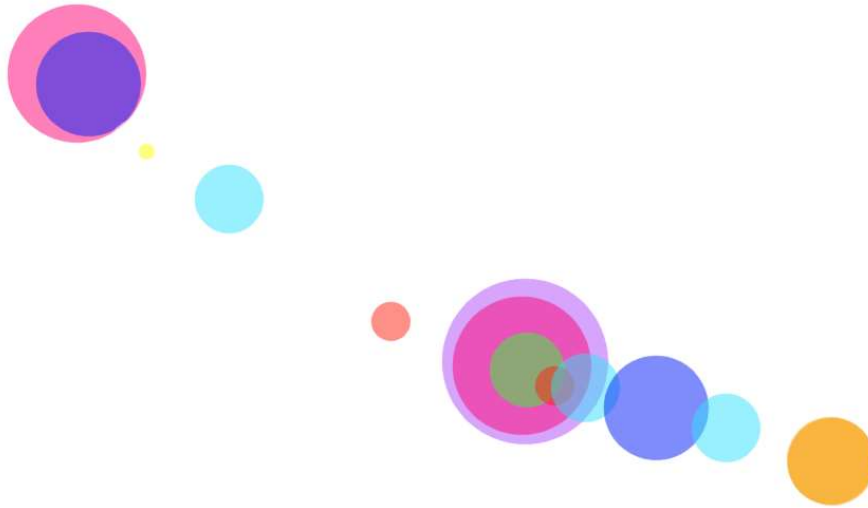
"Kiss me, Eve," said her sister. The child pressed her red lips fondly on the flushed face bending over her; and dropping her head on

Kate's shoulder, in five minutes was fast asleep. She could not comprehend her loss, and fancied that her sister would return in the morning.

A few more tears and kisses showered on the

unconscious child—a last lingering look around the familiar room—and in the dull, grey light of early dawn, Kate Canfield left her father's house.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



MEETA CLIFTON'S FIRST AND SECOND LOVE.

BY CLARA MORETON MOORE.

MEETA CLIFTON was sitting alone in her luxuriously furnished boudoir, one hand veiling her eyes from the subdued light of the apartment, the other carelessly resting on the closed and splendidly bound volume lying in her lap. Her small lips were tightly compressed, and now and then there stole from the veiled eyes large tears, which glanced along her cheeks like drops of dew on the petals of a blushing rose.

From the opened windows of the conservatory there came a mingled perfume of many blossoms, and at her feet lay the half finished wreath of delicate buds, which but a few moments before she had been busily twining. A door opened, and Meeta's reverie was broken. She raised her large, thoughtful eyes, and met the anxious and inquiring gaze of her devotedly fond mother.

"Tears! tears again, my darling—tell me, Meeta, why is this? Have you not every luxury which you could desire?—every wish granted as soon as expressed?—and still you persevere in weeping away your mornings, and sighing away your evenings as though your heart was breaking. There is some cause for this, Meeta, and you must tell it to me, my child." Mrs. Clifton had commenced in an almost playful tone of voice, but as she proceeded her tones, if not her words, assumed a tinge of bitterness, and when she ceased a look of vexation had entirely displaced the one of motherly anxiety, which had before so plainly predominated. Meeta stooped, raised the wreath, and selecting a sprig of jessamine from the flowers before her, diligently bent over her work, as she carelessly answered—

"It is not strange that one should have sad thoughts at times, mamma, and I have been reading a sad tale this morning."

Mrs. Clifton lifted the volume. It was a book of German legends.

"I wish you would stop reading these German stories, Meeta—you know you were always visionary enough. Come, child, put up this nonsensical romance and dress yourself; I will order the carriage, and we will go down to Betty's and see what they have new and pretty." A look of weariness, almost of disgust, passed over Meeta's strikingly beautiful features as she arose from the lounge, and carefully laid her wreath in a porphyry urn half filled with water. With a languid step she followed her mother from the room—up the staircase, and then gliding into her own

dressing-room, she closed the door, and turned the key in the lock. She threw a careless glance around the chamber, and met the reflection of her own graceful form in the Psyche glass. The marble forehead so thoughtfully serene—the dark eyes so intensely brilliant—the faultlessly chiseled mouth—she noted all, and then with an almost sorrowful smile, she said—

"For these must I listen to the flatteries I despise, while not one soul in the wide world understands me as I long to be understood." Throwing herself upon the couch, she again pillowed her head in the palm of her beautiful hand, and the moments stole onward unheeded, although they bore upon their wings many a soft sigh; escaping from the spirit which was ever developing itself in earnest aspirations.

"Meeta, are you ready?"

"In one moment, mamma;" and tying on her bonnet, and folding her cashmere about her, she joined her mother in the hall.

After making their purchases at Levy's, Mrs. Clifton ordered the coachman to drive to the United States Hotel, where Meeta and herself immediately proceeded to call upon some friends from St. Louis.

They found Mrs. Nugent and her daughter in the parlor—Miss Nugent singing a popular song, accompanied by a gentleman beside her, whose deep, rich voice swept the fine chords of Meeta's heart, as a summer breeze would sweep over the trembling strings of a wind-harp. But the melody it awoke died not as soon away. How many times in the watches of the sleepless night that succeeded that eventful meeting, did Meeta Clifton listen to the echoing vibrations which so powerfully moved her—how many times did she repeat to herself his musical name—"Clarence Grenville." It seemed to her the golden key which was to unlock for her the treasure-house of the future.

The next day Mrs. Nugent and her daughter passed with the Cliftons. Mr. Grenville dined with them, and when he bade them good evening, he bore away the jessamine which Meeta had twined in her wreath—the wreath she had wept over, little dreaming one of its flowers would be pressed to the lips of her "first love."

Days, weeks, months glided onward, and Meeta and Clarence were betrothed. In Grenville had Meeta found the ideal she had pictured; and fully

understood and appreciated by him was her noble and sensitive nature. Never wearied of her wild imaginings, he listened hour after hour to the tide of brilliant thought which gushed carelessly from the deep wells of her intellect, or flowed calmly from the boundless seas of her affections. He had passed the first flush of manhood, and disgusted with the heartlessness of the throngs, in whose midst he had moved a polished man of the world, he looked upon Meeta's rare and beautiful attractions with surprise and glowing admiration; for even at their first meeting had his discerning eye penetrated the almost haughty coldness of her manners. An intimate acquaintance soon ripened into love upon his part, and the avowal of it was met with no affectation of indifference by Meeta. Upon the very faultless where but a few months before she had wept because she so longed for a sympathizing spirit, did she sit by the side of Clarence, hand clasped in hand, and the pure blood mantling her cheeks with crimson, as she listened to the eloquent words which told her how fondly—how devotedly was she beloved. After their engagement most of their mornings were spent together; either in riding, or walking, or in their favorite apartment, the boudoir. There, one morning, Clarence surprised her, so deeply engrossed in the German tale she was reading, that he raised her hand from the table before she was aware of his presence.

"I am jealous of that book, Meeta, and I challenge you to give it me."

"Ah, Clarence, my German books are all the world to me in your absence—there I live over all the happiness I experience in your presence, and sometimes I so identify myself with the feelings of some favorite character, that I forget the matter-of-fact world of now-a-days."

"Then is the present 'matter-of-fact' so disagreeable to you, Meeta?"

"Oh, no, Clarence; I am far happier than any of my heroines since we have met; so happy that I sometimes tremble lest the bright dreams which gilded my pathway so suddenly and beautifully vanish. Shall I tell you my last night's dream, Clarence?"

"Certainly, dearest, but I am sure with your strong mind you are not in the least superstitious; although I easily divine that the dream was not a pleasant one by the Madonna-like look which you wear. There; your eyes a trifle lower; that will do. Now your expression is exactly that of Ellen Gray, my first love. I must tell you all about that, Meeta."

Meeta's eyes were turned full upon Clarence Grenville's before his last sentence was finished. Slowly from her cheeks the rose-hue faded, and strangely hoarse was her voice as he said,

"Clarence, you have surely never loved before!"

"Most assuredly I have, my loveliest, and my best," he replied, at the same time vainly endeavoring to imprison the hand she had withdrawn.

"Oh, Clarence, this is terrible! this is cruel! You have loved before, and yet *you dare* to bring to me a heart whose altars are soiled with the ashes of the sacrifices which you offered up in other days. Clarence Grenville! is this the return for the unbounded love which I have poured upon you?—no, not upon you, but the ideal with whom I fancied I had exchanged a heart as fresh, and pure, and fervent as my own." Clarence looked upon Meeta with surprise.

"Surely, dear one, this is but a jest. You cannot imagine that my love for you is less strong or less abiding, because my fancies have been enthralled before. You will not let such a trifling cause interfere with our happiness, Meeta. My love for you is too deep for such bubbles upon the surface of the past to effect for a moment."

Slowly from her cushioned seat Meeta arose—there were no tears in her eyes, but the pupils were painfully dilated, and her colorless cheeks and lips bore unmistakeable signs of the struggles of her proud heart. For one moment she paused in front of her betrothed—with a low whisper she bowed her head.

"Take back this ring, Clarence—our marriage can never be, and henceforth I am to you only as a bubble upon the waters of the past. God in mercy grant that it may disturb the serenity of my life no more than it will yours." Another moment, and she had gone. How bewildered was the look which Clarence cast upon the closing door—with what wild energy did he spring forward—it was too late.

He seized the pencil which lay upon Meeta's escritoire, and wrote hurriedly upon a blank sheet of note-paper.

"For God's sake, Meeta, come back to me—for my sake, come—for thy own sweet sake, beloved. Too closely woven are the inmost fibres of our hearts for this rude blow to separate. Come to me, darling, I will tell you all. I have not one thought which I would hide from you—come, and let these moments of unnecessary torture cease. Forever thine, and thine only,

CLARENCE."

He rang the bell, and sent the note to Meeta's room. It seemed ages before the answer was brought to him. Eagerly he broke the seal and read—

"No time can change me—no persuasions can induce me to become yours. It was but this morning that I read a story of the sufferings—the intense heart-sufferings of one who wedded

a man that had loved before—turn to the index of the volume I was reading—you will find ‘Das Hertz-gebrochene,’ read it, and ask your own heart if you wonder at my decision. My last night’s dream was but a prophecy of the future to me. I was wandering in a beautiful path; overhead there were arching vines; their green and glossy leaves bent over me; their snowy blossoms filled the air with perfume, and at every step I crushed the dewy violets, and the fragrant wild flowers that were woven so thickly in the velvet turf. Everything about me was gloriously beautified—my path was onward. From the deep shade of the wreathing vines I suddenly emerged into an open space. The day-god was resting his head upon the blue and cloud-capped hills of the far west—slowly I saw him sink into the fleecy, snow-white pile; and then I watched the golden stars gleam one by one from the enameled heavens. Cold and stately the moon looked forth from the windows of the east, and the jeweled stars trembled and grew dim in her queenly presence. A strange icy sensation girdled my heart—I looked down upon my path—I was on the verge of a precipice—*one step further, and I had been lost!* From the depths below—so far that my eyes could not penetrate, I heard the tumultuous noise of rushing waters; upon the opposite side another precipice loomed far up, and across this fearful gorge a single thread was spanned! my path laid over it—I could not go back. I looked up to the heavens, was there no way of escape?—no extending arm to save me? Dark clouds in giant forms were trooping upward—they spread their tents about the moon—they wrapped the whole earth in their gloomy folds: from the abyss below unearthly voices were shrieking to me—even the very thread whose strength I was to trust to, was now lost in the darkness! In my agony I struggled with my fate and awoke—awoke to thank my God it was but a dream, little imagining it would so soon prove reality. I still stand upon the verge of the abyss, but motionless, for I have ceased to struggle. The cord may yet prove of sufficient strength to bear me over to the beautiful path beyond, but if it break, and I am dashed upon the rocks below, may he who spread the cord feel but one tithe of the anguish which is now eating to my heart’s core.

“Farewell forever; from this moment, meet where we may, we are strangers: ‘from this hour I commence the task of rooting out every memory of the past which is associated with you. It will be in vain to write me, your letters will return unopened, and unanswered. The path I have chosen, dreary as you may think it, has far more of solace than that of ‘Das Hertz-gebrochene,’ whose history I wish you to read. Again, farewell forever,

MEETA CLIFTON.”

As Clarence finished reading, tears stole from his eyes—“tears even though he was a man.” He arose, dashed them away, and paced the room hurriedly.

“She mistakes her own strength—she knows not what she is doing. My God, Meeta, you will break both our hearts.”

Again he sat down upon the lounge—he raised the book, but his mind was too much agitated to read. Although the story was written with a masterly hand, he found it utterly incapable of enchaining his attention, and with an impetuous movement he threw the book on the table. An hour passed on. Vainly had he hoped that Meeta might come to her room, that he might see her once again, and now with a few of her favorite flowers, which he had gathered from the conservatory, he passed from the room where he had spent so many happy hours with his young betrothed. Once more he looked back—there was the harp over which he had so often hung entranced in the earlier days of their acquaintance—should he never hear its tones again? The thought was agony, with a quick step he turned from the room, and was soon rapidly wending his way to his hotel. After passing a sleepless night, he wrote in his journal thus—

“I have passed a night of mental anguish; such an one as I can never pass again, for with the morning light has come a stoical indifference which I expected years alone could bring me. I have loved Meeta Clifton almost idolatrously. I love her still, despite the visionary philosophy with which her mind is so deeply imbued. She is young—not seventeen—a few years from this time she will look upon these things in a different light. I will go to Europe, and when I return, if she has loved me as fervently as I do her, she will remain true to my memory, and perhaps better prize the matured love she has so scornfully rejected.”

The next day he was on his way to New York, and in one week from the day of their parting, Meeta read his name amongst the passengers who had sailed in the packet ship Oxford. She crushed the paper with both hands, then pressing them to her face, she sobbed like a child. They were the first tears which she had shed for Clarence Grenville, but not the last!

It was a balmy June morning that against one of the vine-wreathed pillars of the conservatory Meeta leaned. Her dark eyes were as thoughtful as ever, and far more red, and there were traces of tears upon their silken fringes. Already had she found that the second love of Clarence Grenville was far dearer to her than aught on earth beside. Should she pour out her whole soul to him on paper, and thus summon him back? No, pride forbade the thought. She

would suffer in silence—she would so school her heart that none should know how troubled were its waters. He would find some new love in the beautiful lands he had gone to, and she would learn to hear his name linked with another—calmly and coldly would she hear it, not a flush should mantle her brow, not a tear dim her eyes. She would drink the cup she had prepared, and no one save herself should dream how darker than midnight were the dregs.

A hand was laid lightly upon Meeta's—the one which rested amidst the vines. The chain of thought was broken, and she looked up into her father's face. In expression it was but the reflection of her own, so sad, so thoughtful.

"Meeta, I have sorrowful news, my child—come into the library with me;" and he drew her hand within his arm. She followed without speaking, but her heart beat faster at every step. They sat down together upon the broad divan.

"It is now nearly two months since poor Clarence left us—although you refused him, Meeta, I cannot but think that you have some sentiments of affection for one every way so worthy of them, and I almost tremble to tell you the fearful—" Mr. Clifton paused, for the expression of deep suffering upon Meeta's face was too plain for her father to doubt for a moment longer the love in her heart.

"Tell me, father, that he is alive—that he is not dead; I can bear anything but that."

Mr. Clifton shook his head mournfully—it was enough, for with a scream of anguish Meeta threw herself upon the floor.

"Meeta! my child! my darling! listen to me—do not moan so piteously. Here, rest your head upon this cushion—there, love, be calm, I will go for your mother."

Mr. Clifton hastened up to his wife's dressing-room. She was reading a paper, and her eyes were discolored with weeping.

"Margaret, we have deceived ourselves, Meeta loves Clarence. I tried to break the news to her gently, but she surmised before I commenced, and is now giving way to the most passionate grief."

Mrs. Clifton immediately went down with her husband. They met Meeta at the door, and both started back in surprise. She was perfectly calm—there was not a trace of suffering upon her face.

"Clarence is dead, mother," she said, as she passed them quickly, and hastened on to her room.

"Follow her," whispered Mr. Clifton, to his wife, "she is too calm."

"Meeta, let us talk calmly about this distressing event," said Mrs. Clifton, as she drew a chair close to the couch where Meeta had thrown her-

self, and now lay with her eyes widely distended and fixed full upon the ceiling—she made no reply.

Mrs. Clifton knew that the wildest grief was not so dangerous as this freezing apathy, and she strove to awaken some emotion.

"Did your father tell you the particulars, my dear?" There was no answer.

"The Oxford was wrecked off the Cornwall coast, and not one soul saved—very terrible, but you must not blame yourself in the least. It was very foolish in Clarence to go off so suddenly, but it was fated to be so, and no regrets can alter his fate, my child."

"Fated!" moaned Meeta, through her closed teeth. There was a quivering of the eyelids, a quick muscular motion about the nerves of the lips, followed by a piercing scream which rang through the house.

Mrs. Clifton started to her feet, and her husband, who was waiting at the door of the apartment, immediately joined her.

"A single cord! a thread to cross upon! I cannot," screamed Meeta. "Clarence, save me—help me to cross. Where are you, Clarence? It is dark—it is fearfully dark, but give me your hand, and I will come to you—it is but a step between, oh, for the love of heaven, do not leave me! I was wrong, I was cruel, but do not upbraid me now, for the flames are about me, they scorch! they burn! oh, help me! save me, Clarence!"

Thus during all that fearful night did Meeta rave. With the morning light came calm unconsciousness—for weeks she lay in this state—then came months of convalescence, in which the spirit seemed wavering between love for the beautiful things of earth, and longings for its promised rest in the home of heaven.

Two years had passed since Meeta's illness—two years of constant anxiety to her devoted parents. They had left no means untried to divert her mind from the one absorbing subject. Through all the most interesting portions of the United States had they travelled, but they could not restore the cheerful smiles of other days.

As a last resort, Mr. Clifton proposed an European tour. To this his wife at first objected, fearing that it might re-call to Meeta's mind more vividly the painful past; but upon advert-ing to the subject in her presence, they found her not only willing, but eager to undertake the proposed journey. In a few weeks they embarked for London. From there they proceeded almost immediately to France, and after travelling through portions of that country and Spain, and Portugal, they reached Naples in time to spend Meeta's twentieth birth-day. Here they expected to pass the winter, and Mr. Clifton was

so fortunate as to procure a palazzo in one of the most delightful situations. The grounds were enchantingly laid out, and the interior of the palazzo was luxuriously furnished. The excitement which had buoyed up Meeta's drooping spirits during their hurried travelling, now seemed to die away. Day by day her beautiful face grew far purer and paler, and the disappointed mother wept bitter tears over her blighted hopes. The physician they had called in pronounced her in no immediate danger, but this was but little encouragement to the distressed parents.

Suddenly the aspect of things changed. Meeta's favorite room was upon the first floor, and overlooked the bay. Here she had gathered all her souvenirs of home—vases of fragrant flowers were scattered about upon antique tables—fine landscape paintings adorned the walls, and against a marble statue rested a harp, which Meeta had but seldom used.

By one of the open casements of this room, Meeta had reclined for nearly an hour, looking out upon the vineyards and the blue sky beyond. Suddenly she turned to her harp, and after a short impromptu prelude, she commenced singing—

Come to my bosom, merry thoughts and glad,
Come with the timbrel, and the joyous song,
Come 'ere the light of my young youth has fled—
It is not well that ye should linger long!

Come pleasure, with thy clarion breathing voice,
Come, whisper music at my heart's lone shrine;
Thou wert my first desired, my only choice,
When a young child I played beneath the vine.

Come with thy dancing feet o'er sadness flying,
Come, chase my grieving spirits gloom away,
And with thy Syren voice dispel the sighing
Which echoes through my heart from day to day.

What though my bosom holds but ruined shrines?
What though the cypress spreads around its gloom?
Music and mirth can dance among the vines
That arching grow above Love's early tomb.

As she finished, her hand fell motionless by her side. Her fine head was thrown back, and the chiseled features looked as pure and cold as the marble beside her. Her braided hair, black and glossy as the raven's wing, was confined in a simple Grecian braid, and knotted around with pearls. Her large, thoughtful eyes were fixed so intently upon the amber sky, that the two, who stood motionless by the marble balustrade, hesitated whether they should disturb the enchanting tableau, or remain and enjoy its beauty.

The eldest of the two, was the physician, Dr. Villiers; the other an Italian, Signor Manfredi, a friend of the doctor's, who had accompanied him once or twice before in his visits to his fair patient, and who seemed exceedingly enamored with her surpassing loveliness.

Not for one instant had he ceased to gaze upon her during the song, and when her voice, so mournfully sweet and sad, died away, he dashed something, very like tears, from his soul-speaking eyes.

The lower part of his face was so concealed by his immense moustache and beard, that the features were not visible, but the forehead was broad and massy, and the dark chesnut hair which fell in such profuse waves upon his shoulders, only added to its beauty. Dr. Villiers at length stepped forward.

"I have broken the spell, Miss Clifton, for I did not dare to let you look any longer upon that magnificent sky, lest your soul should escape through your eyes, as my friend Manfredi's seemed to be escaping."

Meeta smiled, as she welcomed the doctor and his friend, but the smile rested only on the lips—the eyes were as sad as ever.

Dr. Villiers went on in the same playful strain he had commenced, until he left the saloon to search for Mr. Clifton.

"Will you sing me that song again, Miss Clifton, or am I asking too much?" said the signor.

"I would gladly oblige you, but it is impossible," replied Meeta, "I composed it as I sang."

"Is it possible! do you know as I looked at you, I imagined you a second Corinne, and I wished from my heart that I——"

Their eyes met—the Italian's drooped suddenly, as if he had presumed too much upon the short acquaintance. A crimson flush spread over Meeta's face, and died away as suddenly. The rest of their conversation seemed restrained, and it was evidently a relief to both when Dr. Villiers returned with Mr. and Mrs. Clifton.

The conversation then became general; Signor Manfredi entering with spirit into some descriptions of the scenery about Naples. He was exceedingly eloquent, and Meeta more than once found herself gazing upon him, with more interest than she had felt for any one for years. Her parent, noticed the change with pleasure, and the good doctor fairly chuckled, and rubbed his hands in glee, as he said in an aside to Mr. Clifton, "ah, we'll have her a convert to second love yet." Meeta little dreamed of the conspiracy going on between her parents, and her excellent physician. *Their plot was well laid.*

As days passed on, neither of them seemed to mistrust that there were any designs in their frequent meetings; yet Meeta had learned to consider the hours long, in which he was not lingering by her side, and Manfredi spent the time which was not devoted to her, within sight of her palazzo. In less than a month from their first acquaintance, Signor Manfredi, with all the

ardor of his southern temperament, bowed himself at Meeta's feet, and passionately avowed his love.

"Not yet, not yet," sighed Meeta, "let us be friends, but no more."

"No," replied Manfredi, "I cannot live longer in your presence, and not be more to you than I am. You must love me, Miss Clifton, or if you give me no hope, I leave you this night forever—do not turn from me, I beg of you. Look upon me—read my love in my eyes—the love no words can tell, and say but one word. 'go' or 'stay'—it is all I will ask to-night."

Meeta raised her drooping lids, and met his eyes—oh, that one thrilling glance! it re-called the days that were past; and yet strong as was their memory, she bowed her head and rested it upon his shoulder, acknowledging to herself that her second love was stronger—more thrillingly intense.

In the blissful present, Meeta seemed to have buried all memories of the painful past. She was herself again, warbling like a wild-bird, as clinging to his arm she wandered through the beautiful saloons of the palazzo. She sang for him the same song which years before she sang for Clarence, and he kissed the tears from her humid eyes—tears which seemed to well from excess of joy.

When they rambled through the grounds, he wreathed her hair with his favorite flower—the white and starry jessamine—then paused to gaze upon her increased beauty.

The third evening after their engagement, found them seated in the colonnade which overlooked the bay. Manfredi was gazing with peculiar tenderness upon his affianced bride. She seemed enrapt with the beauty of the moonlight scene before her.

"This is very beautiful, dear Meeta, but were you ever in Germany?"

"Never—papa wished to travel there before we settled ourselves here, but I was a little obstinate, and he yielded to me."

"We must take our bridal tour in that direction, dearest. Germany is a most interesting country to travel in. Scarce a spot, but has its own peculiar tale, or legend—some of them extremely thrilling. It was from reading one of those legends, that years ago, I resolved never to marry one who had loved before."

A shade passed over Meeta's face, she drew her hand from the one clasping it so tenderly, and pressed it tightly over her eyes.

"I have loved before, Lorenzo—loved well—high as ardently and devotedly as I do you now."

"Loved another! impossible!" commenced Manfredi.

"No, not impossible—it was the resemblance in the tones of your voice to him—in the glance of your eye, that first awoke the love I bear you now, and oh, Lorenzo, it was the same foolish belief which caused our separation—a separation which for more than three years, made me lose all love for life."

"Meeta, if you were to meet him again, would you not forget me?"

"That is impossible—he was wrecked scarce a month from our parting." She shuddered as she spoke; Manfredi noted it, and said, "Meeta, you love him yet!"

"I have so blended my love for him, with my love for you, Lorenzo, that I have felt that—indeed I cannot tell you how, you will think me strange, but your manners, your tones, your eyes were so like his, it seemed to me that"—she was so agitated, she could not say more.

"So I am to understand that while I supposed you was loving me for myself, you was only loving me, because of my resemblance to an earlier love. Is that it, Meeta?"

There was nothing harsh or chiding in the tones of his voice. Meeta raised her eyes and met the same all-powerful glance. A moment more, and she felt his arm encircling her waist—her head nestling in his bosom.

"Lie thus, dearest, until I tell you a story of the past—do not tremble so, my bird, or I shall fear to tell you."

At this moment Dr. Villiers called from the saloon,

"Come here, Miss Clifton, we want you to sing for us."

Manfredi arose, and led Meeta to a seat within the saloon.

"Doctor, I was just commencing a story, you must not interrupt me, when I have done, she will sing for you if you wish it."

"Certainly, certainly," replied the doctor, and wheeling his chair up to the lounge where they were sitting, he took one of Meeta's hands, and carelessly placed his fingers upon the wrist. Mr. and Mrs. Clifton retained the seats they had occupied when Meeta and Manfredi had entered from the colonnade.

"Meeta, darling," said Mrs. Clifton, her eyes moistened with the unbidden tears she was vainly striving to crush, "you must not let Signor Manfredi's story excite you."

Meeta looked around wonderingly—her mother's tearful eyes—her father's expression of intense anxiety—the doctor's evident watchfulness—what could it all mean? Inquiringly she directed her glance to her lover. Mr. Clifton arose and came toward her.

"Meeta, prepare your mind for a very great, a sudden shock; do you think you can bear it?"

"What can it be father? I can bear anything, but the suspense. I see you all here; what have I to fear?"

"Nothing to fear, but much to rejoice over, my child; we have deceived you—Manfredi is not the name of your betrothed—can you not guess who he is?"

It was almost a vacant look, which for a moment Meeta cast around; then she met the same thrilling glance, and a gleam of triumphant joy lit up her features as exclaiming,

"Clarence! my Clarence! oh, my heart told me this long ago!" she sprang into his extended arms.

"She is safe, thank God," said Dr. Villiers, as he turned from the tearful but happy group. "She got through it wonderfully well. I must say I felt a good deal of anxiety, but these women are always ahead of you. I never surprised one yet, they are always thinking so, or feeling a presentiment, or dreaming so, or something or other of the sort."

He took the opportunity, while his back was turned of brushing the tears from his eyes, for Dr. Villiers had lived many years in the world, and he did not care to be seen weeping. Then looking back, he said,

"Oh, ho! we are so happy now, that we don't care about hearing the story—how do you know who it is, Miss? we have not told you yet. It may be the wandering Jew, or Belzebub himself, for all you know to the contrary."

The next day, Meeta heard the story, which Signor Manfredi, alias Clarence Grenville, had commenced. The packet ship Oxford, on whose books he had registered his name, sailed without him, as he had concluded, at the urgent persuasion of a southern friend, to go with him to New Orleans, where he remained several months. The next two years he passed travelling in Europe—he heard the fate of the Oxford and knew that his American friends would believe him lost. He was very willing that it should be so, as some such plan as the one he finally pursued, had occurred to him. For this purpose he suffered his hair to grow long, and cultivated his moustache and beard to perfection.

Upon his return to the United States, his most intimate friends failed to recognize him. He found that the Clifton family were travelling; he searched in vain at several of the most fashionable watering-places, during the succeeding summer, and eventually followed them to Naples. He immediately made himself known to Mr. Clifton, and told him the particulars of his refusal, and his desire to win Meeta's second love. Dr. Villiers was consulted—his consent given, the doctor introduced him as his friend, with the result which is already known.

At their palazzo in Naples was the marriage of Clarence Grenville and Meeta Clifton celebrated, and although Meeta denies it, her husband still persists in saying that he was her second love.



EMMA HOWARD.
A TALE OF MARRIED LIFE.

BY MARY DAVENANT.

GREAT was the sensation produced in the town of C——, when it was known that the beautiful Emma Weston, the belle of the village, and the daughter of one of its prominent inhabitants, was about to be married to a wealthy physician of Philadelphia, in which city she had spent great part of the winter. Curiosity was on tip-toe to know what sort of a wedding they would have, when it was to be, and what kind of a person the groom elect was, with other particulars too tedious to mention. At last a tall and handsome stranger who arrived at the hotel, was seen to wend his way toward Mr. Weston's, and next day the whole community were electrified by the intelligence that Emma had been married that morning in church, and had gone off while most of the *upper-ten* of C—— were dozing on their pillows.

How it came to be managed so quietly was the wonder, until Mrs. Weston, Emma's step-mother, let out that the intention was to have had a handsome wedding a week later, but that when Dr. Howard arrived he told them he found it impossible to be so long from home, and insisted so strongly upon being married immediately, that they could not resist his will. The good lady did not appear to have been much charmed with her new son-in-law.

"He was very high and grand," she said—"he talked very little, and when he did he seemed to be thinking of something else—she did not see what Emma had fancied him for, unless it was his handsome face." Mrs. Weston forgot what had been a powerful attraction with herself when she was eighteen.

Meanwhile the newly married pair pursued their journey, and on the evening of the third day arrived at the home Dr. Howard had prepared for his wife. It was a handsome house in one of the principal streets, but Emma, whose head was filled with fashion and nonsense, and whose fancy had pictured the rooms glittering with *or-molu* and *bijouterie* like Mrs. Somebody's, and lined with mirrors and flaming with satin, like Mrs. Somebodyelse's, was a little disappointed at the plain, substantial, matter-of-fact appearance the whole establishment presented. True, everything was handsome and well adapted for comfort, but there was nothing for

mere show, and the bare walls and dark furniture had a cold and desolate look that chilled her feelings. They were not warmed either when her husband, after taking his tea in haste, went off to visit some patients, leaving her to her own reflections. Emma felt this to be unkind and began to cry, and her eyes were still red when Dr. Howard returned; but he never seemed to observe them, and began to talk first of his patients and then of their household arrangements, as if he was conversing with an old nurse or housekeeper, and not with a beautiful young creature who had been but three days his wife.

"I do wonder why he fancied me!" thought Emma, next day, when her hair exquisitely dressed by Le Page, a delicate veil shading her blooming cheeks and giving softness to her rich dress, she surveyed herself in her dressing-glass before descending to receive her bridal visits—"I am sure it was not for my money, or my grandeur, or anything but myself, and I have not grown any uglier since he courted me. Even then I thought him cold and different from other men, but I was only too glad to get him and to leave that hateful, stupid C——. But I think he must admire me to-day," she thought, as gathering up her gloves and fan she hastened down stairs, hoping to see him before her friends came.

But Dr. Howard had been suddenly called out, and did not return until the room was half filled with company, and Emma, in her pleasure at seeing herself so much an object of admiration with others, had forgotten it was for him alone she sighed when her tasteful toilet was made.

"Have we not had a charming day!" she exclaimed, when their guests had departed, and Dr. Howard was standing in a brown study with his back to the fire.

"To me it was very tiresome," said the doctor, yawning—"but you are very fond of society, Emma, and I am not."

"Oh, I like it better than anything in the world!—that is," she added, taking his hand, and smiling sweetly in his face, "if you are with me."

"Thank you, love," he said, "but I hope you can enjoy it without me too. I am kept so busy that I shall seldom be able to go out with you."

except of course to our wedding parties. I do not wish, however," he added, observing Emma's countenance fell, "to prevent your enjoying what to me is a sad bore. The Ramseys will always be ready to go with you, and I will drop in whenever I can. Heaven forbid that I should want to shut you up with such a grave old fellow as I am." And when he saw Emma's bright eyes fill with tears, Dr. Howard wondered what the mischief was the matter, not dreaming she would have been more grateful for the wish to secure a little of her society for himself, than for the intention of sending her alone into that of others.

But Emma soon found that her husband's happiness (if he enjoyed any, which she sometimes doubted) was by no means dependent upon her. His lectures, his patients, his scientific researches occupied his time so exclusively that he almost appeared to forget her existence.

At first he seemed to wish to excite her interest in literary studies, and finding her perfectly uninformed bought her books, and tried to stimulate her curiosity as to their contents. But Emma, though her abilities were good and her disposition amiable, could not even feign an interest in what was so distasteful to her. She had been a spoiled and a neglected child. Her mother had died when she was an infant, and on her father's second marriage, some years afterward, his wife found his beautiful little daughter so ruined by the indulgence of a foolish grandmother that it would be a hard and an ungrateful task to attempt to bring her under control. So Emma was allowed to do as she pleased until sent to a fashionable boarding-school, where frivolity and vanity were engrafted upon a few showy accomplishments, and the mischief so well begun at home was completed.

Had Emma, however, married a man of more tact and warmer affections, whom she could have entirely loved, much might still have been made of her, but as her fate led her to one who, though in the main kind and generous, appeared to have no affections at all, there was little to be hoped for. For a while she tried to discover whether a strict devotion to his wishes would not awaken warmer feelings toward her. But with regard to her he seemed to have no wishes. She was always free to do exactly as she pleased. She might make sacrifices but they were unregarded, he still continued the same cold, impassive, though just and upright man, whom she must respect but gradually ceased to love. So she turned at last from the hopeless task, and strove to heal her wounded heart with the pleasing balm of public admiration.

There is always a certain *prestige* attending the career of a married belle. Her efforts to gain the

admiration of the other sex are considered wholly disinterested ones, and men are proportionably flattered by the compliment, consequently the beautiful Mrs. Howard, who as Miss Weston had thought herself fortunate in securing one admirer, soon saw herself surrounded by a dozen. Vanity ever grows by what it feeds on, and what Emma at first sought as a refuge she soon pursued for its own sake, and as she had no children, and her home duties occupied but little of her time, she gradually became so devoted to dress, fashion, and a desire for admiration, that her position each day became more dangerous.

Emma had been married about three years, when one evening, at a party, her attention was attracted by the entrance of a lady and gentleman, whose appearance excited a considerable sensation. The lady was very beautiful, and the splendor of her dress, and the grace and dignity with which both responded to the greetings of all around them, indicated that they were persons of wealth and consequence. On inquiry she found they were just from Europe, where Mr. Ellesmere had been residing some years in a high diplomatic station, and whence he had now returned to remain permanently in Philadelphia, his wife's native place. Just before supper Dr. Howard came into the room and bowed to the hostess, who was one of his patients. He was passing through the room with his usually abstracted air, when his eye rested on Mrs. Ellesmere, and he stopped suddenly.

"Agatha!" he exclaimed—"can it be possible?" and a glow of feeling irradiated his countenance.

"Very possible, my dear doctor," said Mrs. Ellesmere, extending her hand with frank cordiality—"had you not heard of our arrival? If not, I am flattered by your recognizing me so quickly. Six years work a change in most of us."

"Even if you had altered I should have felt that it was you," said Dr. Howard, warmly, "for I have not changed at all, at least in feeling."

"In condition we have both changed," replied the lady. "And though old time may have laid his hand gently on us both, I at least cannot forget when I look at my boys at home how long I have been a wife and mother."

This re-called Dr. Howard to himself, and a few inquiries about Mr. Ellesmere and the children brought the conversation to an ordinary channel. Though many others of Mrs. Ellesmere's old friends were pressing toward her, Dr. Howard kept his place by her side. He seemed spell-bound by her presence, and although he found opportunity to say but little, he riveted his gaze upon the lady's face in a manner that became quite painful to her.

"I have been waiting, Dr. Howard, for you to propose introducing your wife to me," she said, at last. "I was admiring her when you entered, and think her very lovely."

Dr. Howard started as if from a dream. "My wife—oh, certainly—I had forgotten—her existence," he added, as he turned to seek her. "Wretch that I am—married to one and devoted heart and soul to another! I have lived more in the last hour than in all the years since last we met!"

As this thought passed through Dr. Howard's brain, his wife flew by him in polka, in which her whole soul seemed engaged, while her waist was encircled by the arm of a whiskered dandy, whose face nearly touched her own.

"Disgusting!" muttered the fastidious husband—"but as I can give her nothing else I must even give her her own foolish way—Emma!" he said, as she paused a moment for breath beside him, "come with me for a few moments, I want to introduce you to Mrs. Ellesmere, a valued friend of mine."

"I can't come now, indeed—this polka is so delightful"—and off she went again, and though her husband twice repeated his request, Mrs. Ellesmere left the room before the introduction took place.

Emma had scarcely leaned her wearied frame in the corner of the carriage that conveyed them home, when her husband rebuked her for her inattention to his wishes. Dr. Howard, though a neglectful, was by no means a cross or an exacting husband, and the unusual severity with which he spoke roused his wife's spirit. The spirit of a vain and frivolous woman is generally a spiteful one, and Emma's reply vexed her husband's already chafed feelings. He became really agitated, and when at last his wife demanded in a peevish tone what Mrs. Ellesmere was to him, that she was to be worried into an acquaintance with her against her will, he replied with passion—

"If you *will* have it—listen! She is the person on earth I most admire and honor. She was my first love"—and he added in a voice scarcely audible—"and my last too, God help me."

Low as the whisper was, it reached the ear of his wife. An expression of agony chased the anger from her face, and she clasped her hands in mute distress. The next moment she drew more closely to her husband's side, and asked—"did she love you in return?"

"No, never! she rejected me, and the anguish of that hour made me the cold and passionless being I have since become."

"Don't ask me to like her then—she has been my greatest enemy," exclaimed Emma.

"I only asked you to make her acquaintance,"

said her husband, coldly. "Your liking or disliking her is not of any consequence," and thus the young wife's better feelings were thrown back upon herself, as they had been a thousand times before, and the gay and admired ball-room belle laid her head upon her pillow with a sad and aching heart.

It was even as Dr. Howard had said. Agatha Desmond's refusal of his hand had been a turning point in his destiny. For years he had loved her passionately, but she was rich and he was poor, and pride, the besetting sin of his nature, had prevented his addressing her. Fortune at last smiled upon him. He rose in his profession, inherited a valuable property, and soon after offered her his hand. Agatha listened to him with undisguised pain. She had always valued him as a friend, but the moment she suspected a warmer feeling she questioned her heart closely, and found no answering affection there. Intellectually she could sympathize with him, and her fine taste and high culture had refined and elevated him; but in heart and soul she felt they were far asunder, and when he asked her hand she frankly told him, he had her friendship but could not win her love. Howard was in despair, but too proud to let the world see his feelings, he put a bold face on the matter, saw her soon after wedded to another with a smiling face but breaking heart, and from that time became the cold, impassive being we have described him.

Agatha had been married about three years, when the lovely face and coquettish manner of Emma Weston for a time had fascinated him. In a professional point of view it was desirable he should marry, so he offered himself at once, and was accepted. Even before his marriage he began to suspect he had committed an error, and soon after he was convinced of it; but it was not until Emma's defects became very painfully visible to him that he discovered how firmly his affection for Agatha held its place in his heart. It had left no room there to be occupied by the gay, young giddy creature whom he had vowed to love and cherish above all others, and whom conscience now told him he had deeply wronged.

Emma had long known she was an unloved wife, but she believed her husband incapable of strong feeling—a being of pure intellect, to whom heaven had denied a heart. On the night we have described she first discovered her mistake. She found that he could love devotedly through years of absence and indifference, and strange as it may seem, her own love for him revived with all its early force, and with it came a pang of jealousy that almost distracted her.

The gay season was then at its height, the Ellesmere's were feted by everybody. To avoid making their acquaintance was impossible unless

Emma remained at home, and this in her present state of restless unhappiness she could not do. Pre-determined as she was to dislike her, Emma found it hard to resist the charm of Mrs. Ellesmere's manner; while apparently engrossed by others she would watch her every movement, especially when conversing with Dr. Howard, and it only made her the more miserable to be able to detect nothing in her quiet, graceful dignity with which she could find a fault.

The effect of her harrassed feelings upon Emma's temper was most unhappy. At home she would scarcely speak to her husband, while abroad she was in such extravagant spirits, and flirted so violently with any one who would flirt with her, that people began to shrug their shoulders and to wonder how Dr. Howard could allow his wife to behave as she did.

Now Dr. Howard had expostulated and in vain, particularly in regard to a certain Count de V——, with whom Emma danced and waltzed continually, and who had singled her out as the recipient of his particular attentions.

As the count was the last European importation, Emma was highly gratified by the preference of one whose rank and fashion made him an object of distinction, she did not, therefore, give the slightest heed to her husband's remonstrance, and soon drew upon herself the punishment of her imprudence.

It was one of the last entertainments of the season—wealth, fashion and taste had all united to render it one of the most brilliant parties that had been given. None of the beauties present eclipsed our heroine in the brilliancy of her appearance, or the exuberance of her spirits on this memorable occasion.

Count de V—— was as usual assiduously attentive, and while all the world was at supper had invited his fair partner to stroll with him in the partly lighted garden, which opened through a conservatory from the ball-room.

Dr. Howard, who happened to notice this movement, soon after followed them and took a seat in a dark alcove near the house. The supper rooms were in an upper story, and the garden was entirely deserted save by the graceful pair who slowly paced its flowery bordered walks. Suddenly Dr. Howard started from his seat—he heard a hurried exclamation, and saw a white figure rush like a frightened fawn up the walk in which he sat—the next instant his wife was sobbing on his bosom.

"Take me away!" she said—"take me away—oh, that dreadful man!" Dr. Howard had scarcely time to place her on the seat he had just left, when the count appeared, and on meeting the last person he wished to see at that moment, he

stammered out some broken English, to which Howard was too infuriated to listen. "Wretch!" he said, and with a single blow the count lay prostrate at his feet. He then turned to his nearly fainting wife, and almost carrying her through a side entrance, they were driven rapidly home.

The usual unhappy and sinful consequences followed. The count and Howard met and both were severely wounded. The latter received a ball in the side, and it was feared he would not survive its extraction. The anguish of Emma's self-reproach rendered her perfectly helpless. But one idea possessed her mind—"my folly has murdered him"—and she could only bend in agony over his bed, and with a wild, despairing gaze watch every movement of the sufferer.

The ball was at last extracted, and a state of prostration ensued, that seemed to indicate a speedy dissolution. But the patient's eye, though dimmed with weakness, appeared to seek some object it could not find, and as Emma knelt beside him she heard him murmur the name of Agatha. The sound pierced her heart, but she whispered in his ear—"shall I send for her?" and the sad smile that followed showed she had divined his wishes.

When Mrs. Ellesmere was announced, Howard begged his medical attendants to retire. Emma would have followed them, but he motioned her to remain. Agatha could hardly control her feelings as she approached the dying bed of him she had so lately seen in all the pride of health and manly beauty. She knelt beside the wretched Emma that she might hear the weak whispers that scarcely reached her ear. A smile of ineffable satisfaction beamed upon Howard's face.

"Thanks—thanks—may heaven bless you!" he murmured, as he essayed to press the hand that grasped his own. Then placing Emma's hand in her's, he said—"my last thoughts should be for her—I leave her friendless, unprotected, a mark for calumny—she is innocent of all but foolish vanity—you have influence—use it for her and be her friend, as you have been mine."

Agatha took the weeping Emma to her bosom and said, "I will—the Almighty helping me—but He may yet spare you to us both!"—and she breathed forth a prayer for help—for healing—for forgiveness—that must have reached the throne of mercy, for it brought down strength and consolation to those that heard her.

From that day Agatha was a daily visitor at Dr. Howard's, and it seemed that a blessing followed her presence there, for the patient gradually revived. His recovery was a tedious one, and in the course of it Emma found Mrs. Ellesmere's newly formed friendship of inestimable value as a consoler, an instructress, an assistant

in her duties. She led the misguided wife and suffering husband to the only true source of strength, of light, and truth, and under her gentle teachings and the near approach of death and judgment the scales seemed to fall from the eyes of both. Both had sinned and each had much to forgive the other. Religion purified and re-united them, and from that bed of suffering they rose to a happier, higher, holier life.

The scandal mongers were bitterly disappointed in the probable separation and possible divorce they had anticipated, the appetite for such things having grown greatly with the rich food that had been afforded it of late. When

Mrs. Howard re-appeared in society, after a short trip to Europe for the benefit of her husband's health, she was more beautiful than ever, for intelligence sparkled in her eye, and happiness bloomed upon her cheek. But though more beautiful, she is not half so much a belle as before, the only admiration she now cares for being that of a handsome, happy-looking man whose eye rested on her with confiding affection.

He is standing beside Mrs. Ellesmere with whom he is conversing earnestly, but Emma is no longer jealous, for she declares she now is more in love with Agatha than her husband is—and we believe her.



DORA AHERTON;
OR, THE SCHOOLMASTER'S DAUGHTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE VALLEY FARM."

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1850, by Charles J. Peterson, as the proprietor, in the Clerk's Office, of the District Court of the U. S. in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.]

It was Sunday morning, a clear, bright day in spring, and the church bell was already ringing for service.

The scene was a village, on a spur of the Alleghanies: a place far away from great cities. The roar and turmoil of the world never reached that quiet retreat, or only faintly like echoes from another sphere.

It was a picturesque place, nestled in a green valley, with the eternal hills piercing the clouds around it. In summer, for the air was peculiarly salubrious, it was often resorted to by travellers, in search of health, or by sportsmen who were fond of angling, for the trout streams in the vicinity were celebrated. It boasted, therefore, a well-kept inn; and on this Sunday morning a stranger stood in the porch of the little hotel, looking up and down the street, as if uncertain which way to go.

The villagers were passing, in their Sunday attire, every one looking happy and gay. The poorest were neatly clad, and had an air of comfort about them that forcibly arrested the attention of the stranger, who was fresh from the metropolis, and could not help contrasting their appearance with that of the squalid women and unshaven men, who lounged about the door-steps of the meaner quarters of a great city, on Sunday mornings.

As each group passed, every member of it in succession, from the parent down to the toddling child, looked back at the stranger. The arrival of a new guest, at the inn, was an event in fact; and gossip was always busy, within an hour, to decide his name, business and character.

The stranger smiled as he saw these exhibitions of curiosity; and his smile was strangely sweet. It is time we described him. He was apparently about twenty-three or four years old, of a graceful, manly form, and rather taller than men ordinarily. His face exhibited very contradictory characteristics. The finely cut mouth, the full nostril, the majestic sweep of the eyebrow told of a strong will in the possessor; while the heavy lid, the long lashes, and the half dreamy expression of the eye itself, in repose,

bespoke as plainly a poetical temperament and a sensitive nature. The perfect union of these opposite qualities, in the present instance, led to a finely developed and harmonious character. When moved by a great occasion no man was more resolute; but it required a worthy object to rouse him. He was not one to waste his energies after the gew-gaws of mere political, or even intellectual ambition. He required a sufficient motive to act before he began to work; and, as yet, he had not found this, and so passed for a dreamer. A great destiny, however, was before him. But more of this as we proceed.

He was still standing thus, when the landlord came out on the porch. The stranger immediately turned.

"What churches have you here?" he said.

"Three, sir. A Methodist, Baptist and Episcopalian."

"Is the latter a new one?"

"No, sir, strange to say. But this place is an old settlement, and had a church in the colony times. The Episcopalians were here before either of the other sects, but they don't keep up as well as the rest—however, you'll hear some fine singing if you go there."

The stranger smiled again, but this time there was something of incredulity, and, it might be, a little of scorn in that smile. He was, in fact, no mean musician himself. Nature had gifted him with a keen sense of harmony, and this had been cultivated to the highest pitch. He had heard, both here and in Europe, the most famous singers of the day, and could detect in the most difficult piece the slightest error of execution. The idea that he was to hear fine singing, in an obscure country church, made him smile incredulously, notwithstanding a naturally kind heart. But he was too well-bred to say anything; and the smile itself was but momentary, flitting across his face, like a sun-cloud over a field of corn, an instant seen, then vanishing.

"I will go there," he said. "I suppose the bell belongs to the Episcopal Church, and that will guide me."

"Yes," replied the landlord, "follow the street

down till you come to that row of willows. There you'll find the mill-dam, and just beyond it, on the other side of the pond, is the old church."

The stranger bowed and set out. It had been dusk when he reached the village, the night before, and he now became sensible, for the first time, of the beauty of the place. Nearly every house had its little green lawn in front, and its bit of orchard ground in the rear; and as it was now the time of blossoming, the whole air was full of fragrance. At the end of the village street stood an ancient mill, its wheel green with moss, and its wooden walls and roof almost black with age. The dam was prettily edged with willows, now green with their first leaf. The pond being high with the late rains, the gates had been raised, and the water now came wildly tumbling and foaming through. The stranger paused a moment and looked below at the rapid fluid, shooting like snowy sheets of silver down the trough, and then whirling away in dark eddies under the black loom of the banks. There was always something soothing to his heart in such a scene; and he could have gazed on it longer, but that the quickened tolling of the bell announced that the church service was about to begin. So he turned and walked on.

Crossing the rude bridge, he saw before him an open space, where three roads met, and just beyond this, in a grove of ancient trees, stood the time-worn little church. An atmosphere of holy quiet seemed to reign around the place. The grey walls of the ancient building; the venerable oaks which overshadowed it; and the grave-yard close by, where, for a century, the righteous dead had lain awaiting a glorious resurrection:—these gave an indescribable, but magical look of repose to the whole scene. A few carriages, belonging to farmers in the neighborhood, were fastened at a respectful distance from the church; and each horse stood quiet at his post, eyeing the arriving worshippers askance, as if even the brutes themselves revered that antique house of God.

Just as the traveller crossed the bridge, and while he was yet some two hundred yards from the building, the bell rang out a final peal, the last lingering comer entered the edifice, and the notes of an organ swelled out on the still morning air and died again melodiously away. When the stranger reached the church the congregation was already at prayer.

The traveller paused till the petition should be over, and looked back over the route he had come. In front was the picturesque village street; on his left the ancient grave-yard; and on the right the mill-pond stretched away for a mile and more, lying quiet and calm under the azure sky, its surface polished like blue Damascus steel. Here and there clumps of woodland ran

out into the lake, till the eye was almost deceived into thinking them islands: and far away, in the mellow distance, the placid sheet of water suddenly disappeared, land-locked seemingly on all sides. The quiet of the whole scene was inexpressibly soothing. Not a wave stirred on the gravelly beach close at hand. Not a dead leaf moved on the whole glassy expanse. The trees that overhung the still water were re-produced in the mirror beneath, as sharply and accurately as if another forest grew downward from their roots. Suddenly an idle boy, from the opposite side of the pond, gave a hallo. The sound broke strangely on the deep silence, and was followed immediately by an echo that seemed more magical still.

But, at this instant, the organ began again; and the stranger entered the church.

It was a low, ancient building, rude to the last degree, and only half filled with worshippers. The pews were high and straight-backed. The organ-loft was over the entrance, and that instrument, which was one of very fine tone for its size, was the only luxury about the place. The stranger had no sooner found a seat, than he turned inadvertently to the choir, so much was he struck with this instrument.

A piece of green moreen, hung from brass rods, effectually concealed the performers from his gaze; but he could not help admiring the masterly manner in which the organ was played. When the anthem came to be sung, he almost started to his feet, for, clear and high, over the deep bass of the instrument and the choral accompaniment, rose a female voice, so sweet, so full, so exquisitely handled, that, what with the surprise, and what with the serene religious train of mind his walk had induced, he thought he had never heard anything from Grisi or Malibran to rival it.

"The landlord is right," he reflected, "she is, indeed, a prodigy. Who would have thought to find such vocalization, united to such expression here."

But his surprise was still greater when, the minister having retired to change his robes, instead of the hymn usually sung, the same voice began that sublime air of Handel's, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." The stranger sat transfixed. Of a deeply reverential mind himself, he was an enthusiastic admirer of Handel. And yet, though he had heard that air sung a hundred times, it had never been with the feeling and pathos with which it was performed now. The opening words came pouring out, like molten gold, so soft and mellow, with every tone full of a subdued exultation, that it almost brought tears to the eyes. As the strain proceeded, the sentiment changed, and profound sorrow agitated the

listener's heart; for the theme was of death, burial and the grave. But when the singer passed, with a rapid, triumphant bound, to the passage, "I know that in my flesh I shall see God," the expression of victory, of joy, of rapture which swelled out in her voice, making the ancient building ring, thrilled her hearer with an almost divine ecstacy. The serene joy, the deep peace, the sublime faith in Christianity to which the singer gave utterance, were answered back from the heart of the listener as if her soul had entered into his and explored its most secret recesses. He gazed, spell-bound, on the curtain, from behind which issued that voice.

When the air ceased, and the last tones of the organ had died away, he still remained looking up to the loft, unconscious of all around him, till the entrance of the minister, and the re-commencement of the services awakened him from this trance.

When the sermon was over, and the congregation dispersing, he lingered behind, in hopes to catch a sight of this unknown singer. He thought he should easily be able to detect her, as every eye must be upon her when she came forth. But in this he was disappointed. The last one of the crowd had passed out, and still no person, such as he knew she must be, had appeared. At last the old sexton came to close the doors, and the stranger was forced unwillingly to depart—unwillingly, we say, for as long as he remained within the edifice, it seemed, to his excited fancy to be ringing with that angelic voice.

During his walk back to the inn, his thoughts were entirely occupied with the unknown singer. His nature had been stirred, to its lowest depths, by the event of the day; and he passed along, unheeding that, soon after he left the church, a young girl, for whom the sexton had waited, had descended the organ-loft; and that, after the old man had carefully locked the door, she placed his arm within hers, and the two together walked away in a direction opposite to that taken by the traveller.

"Well, what do you think of our singing?" asked the landlord, who was standing at his door, waiting for his guest.

The stranger was so abstracted that he would have passed the inn, without noticing it, but for this address. He looked up, and found himself already a step or two in advance of the door, so he smiled at his forgetfulness, and retracing his steps, answered,

"It is miraculous. Who is she?"

His eye kindled with animation as he spoke: his whole face glowed. The landlord laughed.

"I thought you looked incredulous, when I told you we had a fine singer here," he said, "and I am glad you have come round—most

people do, when they hear our Dora—but you asked me who she was. The daughter of the old schoolmaster, sir—he is sexton also. They once saw better days, but they pick up only a poor sort of living here, I'm afraid. However, sir, walk in—for dinner is waiting—and I'm doubtful it will be cold, and do me no credit, if you delay."

It was late in the afternoon before the traveller left his hotel again. He had learned from the landlord that the old church was opened only for morning service, the minister having to preach in the evening at another parish several miles distant. But when he went out, toward sunset, for a walk, the voice of the schoolmaster's daughter still exercised such a control over him that he bent his steps, almost unconsciously, in the direction of the morning.

Arrived at the church, he turned down an old road through the woods, invited by the beauty of the walk. Tall and noble trees, that might have been growing there for centuries, interlaced their branches overhead, till the canopy thus formed reminded him of the groined vault of some mighty minster. Beneath his feet the path was covered with vegetable mould, with only faint marks of wagon tracks discernible; for the road was evidently but little used. Woodland scenery, however, was the traveller's delight, and he walked leisurely on, admiring now the majestic trunks that rose around him, and now the arched vista ahead, until at last his further progress was cut short by a rude, zig-zag fence, with a cleared field beyond.

He might have gone half a mile, since he left the church, or might have walked further; he had not thought of time; and he was startled to find, from the comparative obscurity, how late it was. While in the wood he had attributed the gloom to the trees, but he now found it was really caused by the advancing evening. Yet not entirely thus caused, for, as he looked up, he saw that the sky was overcast; and at the same moment a big drop, falling from the fringe of a cloud, pattered on his face.

A hasty glance around showed him a small house across the field, situated on a more public road. As the rain-drops now began to fall faster, he did not hesitate for an instant, but placing one hand on the top rail of the fence, vaulted lightly into the field.

The shower, like all April ones, was violent as it had been sudden, and he had scarcely reached the house, when the rain descended in a torrent. Without looking to see if the porch in front of the cottage was occupied, he sprang over the low paling, and darted under shelter, taking off his hat as he reached it, and dashing a shower of rain-drops to the ground.

Then, for the first time, he became aware that he stood in the presence of two persons, occupying the doorway of the cottage, and therefore just in front of him.

They were evidently father and daughter; and a second glance assured him that the old man was the sexton, and that the other must be his child.

The parent was sitting in an old-fashioned arm-chair, and had evidently been reading, for his Bible lay open on his lap, with the spectacles across the page. The shower had directed his attention, perhaps, for at the moment the stranger startled him by this sudden intrusion, he had been watching, and apparently with a keen sense of the beautiful, the millions of rain-drops falling across the pond, which lay in sight from where he sat.

His daughter, too, had been gazing at the same brilliant panorama; and it was her expression of delight, as she thus looked, which now arrested the stranger, and fixed itself forever in his memory. Let us endeavor to describe her as she appeared at that moment.

She was about seventeen years old, of the medium height, and with every contour just rounding into the full outlines of womanhood. Unlike most American women, she had an expansive chest and full bust, the result, perhaps, of daily exercise in the bracing mountain air. She sat on a low stool, at her father's side, her elbow resting on his knee, and her hand supported on her hand, the head bent forward a little, while she gazed, as we have said, on the picturesque effects of light and shade produced by the passing shower. The stranger thought he had never seen so beautiful a countenance. The small, full red lips were slightly parted in wonder and delight, partially exposing a set of teeth as white and regular as pearls; the delicate nostril was a little expanded, under the same emotions; and the eyes which, even in that rapid glance, the traveller saw were of a dark hazel, were opened to their full extent, and glowing with all the enthusiasm of a young and pure soul, entranced in the presence of nature. The lower part of that remarkable countenance recalled to the young man the face of the Venus de Medici, so accurate was every proportion, so rounded every line; but the broad, yet high forehead, from which the dark brown hair was pressed back by her hand, elevated her at once above that master-piece of the Pagan world; for the old Greeks, with all their keen perception of the beautiful, had too sensuous an idea of female loveliness to rise to the understanding of Christian womanhood, and would never, therefore, have carved such a brow as that of the schoolmaster's daughter, anywhere but on a Phidian Jove.

The step of the stranger on the porch, and the

dash of the rain-drops from his hat startled her from her reverie, as well as her father: and she sprang at once to her feet, with the lightness of a young doe.

Almost any other person than the traveller would have been embarrassed in these circumstances; but he was a man who had already seen much of life, and who was by education as well as character self-possessed. He bowed low, therefore, avoiding, with great tact, the blushing girl, and addressing her parent.

"I beg pardon, sir," he said, in a clear, deep voice, "for my intrusion; but this April shower must be my excuse."

The schoolmaster rose immediately from his chair.

"You are welcome, sir," he said, with a dignity the stranger had not expected to find in one so humble. "I hope you are not much wet. Will you take a chair? Dora," and he addressed his child, "a chair for the gentleman."

The young girl turned to hand a seat to the stranger, but the latter, anticipating her purpose, sprang forward and took the chair from the still embarrassed Dora.

"Pray—let me," he said: and again speaking to the father, he continued, "no, I am not much wet: I have been much worse so, when trout-fishing, and thought nothing of it."

"You love the 'gentle sport' then, as old Izaak says," replied the schoolmaster. "When I was younger I was fond of it myself, but my old limbs cannot support the fatigue any longer. We have fine streams, however, in this vicinity."

The tone in which the old man spoke, not less than his choice of words and his evident familiarity with books, impressed the stranger with still more respect for his new acquaintance.

"I have come to the village," he said, "because of the reputation the streams enjoy in the neighborhood. In fact, I have been a little out of health, and the physicians have ordered me to recruit."

The easy, but deferential air of the stranger, and the agility, yet grace with which he had sprung to relieve her of the chair, had already attracted Dora's attention, accustomed, as she was, only to young men who were either awkwardly bashful, or impertinently forward; and every word that he said, as the conversation progressed, increased this favorable impression. She did not join in the talk of her father and the stranger, but sat at her parent's knee, listening, with half averted face.

"You could not find a district better suited for your purpose," replied the schoolmaster. "The air is salubrious, and the beauty of the scenery continually invites to out of door exercise. Did you ever see anything finer, of its

kind, than the view from here across the mill-pond? With this shower dancing over the dark water, what could be more picturesque!"

"And the glistening of the rain-drops, as the sunset rays strike them!" responded the stranger. "Every drop seems a diamond. Mark how they are seen for an instant, and then disappear, fleeting downward in a steady stream, one following the other in quick succession, ever-ceasing and yet never-ending—one might think it a scene in a fairy tale. But," he added, smiling, "perhaps, like the rest of the modern world, you abjure fairy tales."

The old man smiled in turn.

"No," he said, "I believe the intellect, as well as the heart is often reached through the fancy. God," he added, reverently, "would never have given us imagination if he had not intended it to be employed for high purposes. I could not enjoy my Bible, or glorious John Milton; if it were not for that faculty; and when I remember that fairy tales first, and afterward the Pilgrim's Progress were the delight of my childhood, I dare not join in the modern cry."

The stranger was more and more astonished to hear an obscure schoolmaster thus converse.

"We are of one mind," he said, "on that point, at least; and on many others, I fancy," he added, while that kindly smile, which made his face so handsome, again glittered over his fine countenance, "I have a suspicion that I heard you play on the organ, this morning."

"I love music," quietly answered the old man, "and used to perform a good deal—but that was when I had a ——" He stopped here suddenly, and seemed embarrassed.

The stranger noticed it, and, with ready tact, came to his aid.

"And this was the 'sweet singer of Israel,' that I heard. Was it not?"

He turned to Dora as he spoke, who, on finding his eyes directed to her for the first time since his entrance, coupled with words of such high eulogy, blushed and looked down again.

"I am passionately fond of music," he said, seeing that the daughter still felt embarrassed in his presence, and again addressing the parent. "I must really express my pleasure at the gratification I received this morning. Had your daughter no instruction?"

"I taught her to the best of my poor ability," he said. "Her mother used to be considered a superior vocalist. But it sometimes seems to me," he continued, affectionately considering her, "that she even excels her parent. There are few here, however," he added, with a sigh, turning again to his guest, "that appreciate good music."

Their talk continued in a similar strain, and

before long, by the exercise of a little tact, the stranger had overcome the timidity of Dora, when she began to take her share in the conversation. She did not speak much or often, indeed, but what she said was full of good sense, and clothed in pure language. Once or twice she even warmed into enthusiasm, and expressed herself accordingly; but, the instant after, she blushed at her own eagerness.

This exquisite sensibility was, in the eyes of the stranger, a great charm. He had seen so much of mere women of the world, whose cheeks never crimsoned except artificially, that he was fascinated by a trait that betokened at once purity of soul, and a fresh and virgin mind.

The feeling which the whole three had for music was a magnetic passport to acquaintance, and even intimacy; and before half an hour, even Dora, who had lived almost entirely secluded from society, and was of a retiring and shrinking habit besides, felt that she could speak to their guest as she would to a brother.

"I shall remain in the village for many weeks," said the stranger, at last rising to go, for the shower had ceased and the sun was already touching the horizon, "may I, occasionally, have the liberty of spending an hour or two with you?"

The old schoolmaster, who rarely found a person of tastes similar to his own, was only too much flattered by this proposal. He rose from his chair, and extending his hand, replied,

"My humble roof, sir, is always ready with a welcome for you."

The stranger extended his hand also to the daughter, who half coyly took it, her little heart, inexplicably to her, all in a flutter.

"And will the same welcome come from you, Miss Dora?" he said.

She raised her eyes to his; it was a sufficient answer.

"We will go with you to the head of the pond. We always take a stroll at this hour on Sunday evenings," said the old man.

So they set out, Dora walking between the two men, listening; for their talk was now of high import, and such as might have passed between sages of old. Science, classical learning, poetry, religion all were laid under contribution, as the passing scene, or the thoughts that flowed from the different remarks, required. In front of the old church they stopped.

"I have forgotten to introduce myself," said the stranger, laughingly, as he shook hands again with the schoolmaster, "but, lest you should think you have made the acquaintance of some idle ne'er-do-well, let me say that I answer to the name of Paul Sidney."

"And mine," said the old man, returning the

smile—a smile that, in both, had a sort of latent scorn for the uselessness of the conventionalism, in the present case—“is Mr. Atherton. My daughter we call Dora, after a saint,” he added, touchingly, “after a saint in heaven.”

“Good night, Miss Dora!” said Paul, retaining her little hand a moment in his own.

“Good night, sir,” she answered, in her sweet, melting tones.

And so they parted. But the old man and his daughter lingered, and often gazed back; and when Paul stopped on the bridge, and with a sigh looked to where he had parted from his new acquaintance, he saw them regarding him. He took off his hat, and waved it in the air; and then remained watching them till they were lost to sight.

We will not describe the numerous interviews that followed. Paul Sidney had little to call him away, and so he lingered in the village. Every evening, after the school was closed, he visited the cottage, and, while he and the old man conversed of books, Dora listened. Or, sometimes, Paul told of his travels, and answered her eager questions about Italy, Greece, Egypt, but, most of all, Palestine. The evening was always ended by a song or two: and then Paul went home musing by moonlight. What this was all to lead to he never stopped to inquire. Paul Sidney had been born to an ample fortune, and had always been indulged, so that he never considered, where his enjoyment was concerned, what might be the consequences. He had not the remotest thought as yet of falling in love with the schoolmaster's daughter, nor did the idea that she might possibly fall in love with him enter his mind. He liked to talk with her father, to hear her sing, and to study her opening intellect. There was something fresh in all this to one palled by the conventionalism of the world: and in the enjoyment it afforded him he did not, at first, look beyond.

Neither did the old schoolmaster gaze into the future. Mr Atherton, indeed, had never been worldly-wise, or, if he had, he might have remained in the comfortable circumstances in which he was born. He had once been a merchant of some standing, but a love of books and of music, and a generous faith in his fellow man, had combined to strip him, in the end, of all his means, and render him glad, in old age, to accept the humble post of schoolmaster to a mountain village, to which he added those of organist and sexton to eke out his support. His wife had died soon after his retreat to this place, leaving a daughter only seven years old. Together father and child had lived, in their secluded retreat, seeing little, and caring less for the world, each being all in all to the other. To the simple mind

of the old man the idea that Dora might love this fascinating stranger never occurred: he did not, in fact, think of her loving any one but him, but, in a sort of vague way, supposed that they would live and die together.

What little money the old schoolmaster could spare had been spent in adding to his slender stock of books: and this library had formed a mutual solace to him and Dora during the long winter evenings. In consequence of reading but few works, and those all good ones, she was much more thoroughly educated than young ladies generally at her age. Paul Sidney, in most respects a remarkable man himself, was frequently startled by the acuteness of her remarks; and came at last to call her jocularly his “little Minerva.”

But it was neither for her intellectual qualities, nor for her great musical genius, that Paul, after a month's intimacy, would have praised her, if he had been describing her to a mother, or sister whom he desired to love her: it was her purity of heart, her firm principles, her sincere piety on which he would have dwelt. These qualities she had learned at her father's feet: in this respect, indeed, daughter and sire were one.

The summer had come, and was half gone, yet still Paul lingered in the village, putting off his departure from week to week.

“Do you know, Dora,” he said, one evening, for he had long since learned to call her by her first name, “that your voice would make your fortune on the stage?”

“I would not sing, in public, in that way, for millions,” answered Dora, with a heightened color.

“Why, is there anything wrong in it?”

“No, I don't think there is. But I should shrink from it nevertheless. I should abhor the display, the false characters, and the thousand eyes bent on me. Oh! it would kill me.”

“But you sing in church, and people look at you there.”

“That is different. Besides sacred music seems to me true and earnest, while that of the opera appears false and artificial. And, in our little church, I know everybody, which is very different from the theatre.”

“Dora has an instinct of what is purest and best,” interposed her father, “though she does not know exactly how to explain it to you. The stage is not bad, *per se*, but only in consequence of its accessories: yet it is bad nevertheless, so much so that no pure-minded woman, if she can help it, will continue on the stage.”

“Mrs. Siddons!” said Paul.

“Mrs. Siddons never associated, as a rule, with members of her profession, but avoided them.

The Bible says, 'enter not into temptation,' and yet, to send a virtuous female on the stage," said the old schoolmaster, warming with this theme, "is to open the gates of hell."

"You have silenced me," replied Paul. "In fact I was only questioning you, Socratically, to see what you would say."

"I am sorry the stage is what it is," added the old man, after a pause, "for, if anything should happen to me, Dora's musical gifts would, but for that, be an easy road for her to competence. But God's will be done!"

He put his hand on his child's head, as he spoke, for she occupied her accustomed seat at his knee; and his words faltered a little as he pronounced the last sentence.

"Do not speak of her having to toil for her living," said Paul, hastily. "As society is at present constituted, such a fate, to a refined female, is terrible."

"And yet it is one," said the old schoolmaster, looking up into his guest's face, "that will probably be Dora's. In the order of nature I must go first—and, when I am gone, what is to become of her? This little cottage, and the bit of land adjoining, I rent. All my worldly possessions, if sold, would not pay a gentleman's hotel bill at a summer watering-place. Dora and I often talk of these things, for it is a maxim of mine that there is nothing which may probably happen in life, which we ought not to prepare ourselves to meet."

The idea of Dora having to labor for her support was so inexpressibly painful to Paul that it revealed to him the state of his own heart, and, for a moment, he trembled at the precipice on which he so unexpectedly found himself.

In love with Dora! And would she return the affection? Or did she look on him only as her father's acquaintance, a sort of gentlemanly book-worm, fond of talking with her parent on certain abstruse questions of law and morals?

What would his family say to such a marriage?—for they had not only a right to be consulted, but the power to prevent the union, or, at least to render it difficult.

But the old schoolmaster gave him no time for reflection, for he continued,

"We have sometimes thought Dora might get a livelihood by teaching music; but she sings altogether by ear, and could not impart even the rudiments. She might teach school, but not here."

"And why not here?" said Paul, for this appeared to him less painful than any other employment.

"Because the school is a sort of foundation, and the terms of the original legacy require that the teacher should be a man. The testator lived

when all the old prejudices against the sex were yet unshaken, and when it was considered sufficient for a woman to know how to knit, bake and spin."

"The times are wiser now," said Paul, vaguely.

"Yes," replied the old man, "but, in justice to our fathers we must remember that the family relation was held more sacred then than now, and that consequently it was not necessary, in a utilitarian sense, that women should be educated as intellectually as at present. Then poor females were supported by contributions from cousins or other relatives, or were taken into the house——"

"And now," interposed Paul, bitterly, "brothers even let their sisters starve before they will support them."

"But Dora hasn't even a brother—no! not a near relation in the world," said the father, with a sigh.

"We are not speaking of her," said Paul, irritably, "but of the social system as it affects women generally."

There was a moment's silence, and then the old man spoke.

"There's a poor chance, I hear, for a lone female, in a great city," he said, fondly stroking his child's head, "and yet there is even a poorer one in a country village, unless she goes out to service, and some are too frail for that." And he tenderly regarded his daughter, evidently still thinking of her.

"Thousands can barely subsist in our great towns," broke in Paul, rising and walking up and down the narrow room with agitated strides. "Thousands die annually," he continued, as if speaking to himself, "worn down by over-toil, and thousands more perish, in soul as well as body."

He said these words wildly. He was thinking of some of the miserable objects he had seen in cities, once, perhaps, as happy, though not as pure as Dora.

The conversation continued for some time longer, on the part of the old schoolmaster; but Paul did not participate in it, except by broken ejaculations. He was, in fact, thinking of Dora and himself. He continued to walk up and down the room, until at last, finding he could not control himself, he seized his hat and abruptly left the house.

That night he slept but little. Paul Sidney was entirely dependent on his father, who being a man of immense wealth, had discountenanced the idea of the son studying a profession. "There will be no necessity of your working," the parent said, "for I have quite enough to spoil you." So Paul, after graduating with high honors, had been sent to Europe. Fond of intellectual pursuits, and, as we have said, of a poetical

organization, he had lived a life of thought rather than of action.

But with the vision of Dora as his wife, came also the idea of earning his own livelihood. No two men could be more unlike than Paul Sidney and his father. The sire was a cold, hard, conventional man, who thought nothing worth living for but the acquisition of wealth, and who, though he might, perhaps, have pardoned his son's union with a portionless woman of fashion, would never forgive his marriage with one both poor and without position. Had Paul's mother lived, she might have been an intercessor between the son and father; and indeed it was from her that Paul derived all the higher qualities of his nature. But now that she was dead, there was no one to stand between the anger of the millionaire and the offending son.

All this Paul foresaw, and it made him hesitate. Not that he thought, for one moment, of giving up Dora, if he should find that she loved him; but the difficulties of his position caused him to reflect seriously, before acting, what it was his duty to do. The conclusion to which he arrived was in accordance with his clear judgment, his upright principles and his firmness of character.

"I will first learn Dora's feelings," he said, "and if she loves me, I will offer her my hand. I will then visit my father and solicit his approval. If he refuses it, I will tell him that I regret I cannot obey him in this, for that I am a man, capable of knowing in what my happiness consists, and not base enough to trifle with the felicity of another or of myself. I will then seek to earn my livelihood, and, when I have succeeded—be it ever so humble—I will marry Dora. Or, if her father dies before that, I will marry her without delay, and trust to God and to a willing heart."

Dora herself lay awake, that night, till the early birds began to sing, in the thicket close by her window. The sudden departure of Paul and his evident discomposure had agitated her unspeakably; she feared she had offended him, and yet she did not know how. She re-called every word that had been spoken during the evening, in hope to discover what had angered him; but in vain. She had never felt so unhappy. And, at last, she burst into tears.

She had so often contemplated the idea of supporting herself, that it had ceased to be painful to her; and it never occurred to her, therefore, that this was what agitated Paul. It was the death of her father, not the penury that would follow, which always made Dora sad in thinking of her future.

Her anxiety to know the cause of Paul's conduct should have revealed to her that she was in
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love; and, in fact, long before morning it did; for Dora was not entirely a mere girl, but in some respects a woman already. The pain she felt at Paul's rudeness betrayed to her the state of her heart. She blushed, even in that darkened chamber, and hid her face in the pillow, as the consciousness of her weakness flashed across her mind.

And yet was it weakness, she said, to herself. Could any one have a nobler heart than Paul? His anger kindled at the slightest act of oppression or injustice to the weak; and he was ever ready to assist the poor with kind words as well as with his purse. Would she ever forget the fervor with which he had sung that air of Handel's, "But who shall abide his coming;" an air whose lofty enthusiasm and divine fervor she had never thoroughly appreciated before. And then his various acquirements, his eloquence in conversation, and the commanding nature of his manly character—how could these but win the admiration, love and reverence of a poor simple girl like herself.

The next evening Paul came early to the cottage. He had stopped, on his way at the school-house, timing his arrival so as to reach it just as Dora's parent, the school being dismissed for the day, was collecting the scattered books and preparing to lock up. Paul entered and surprised him at the task.

"Why, my young friend," said the old man, with some surprise, "this is an unexpected call. You find me, like Cincinnatus, at the plough; for this narrow room is to me what his acres were to him. I fear you were not well last night, you left us in such a hurry."

"I have a few serious words to say to you, Mr. Atherton," said Paul, taking a seat at one of the desks, placing his elbow on the rough and whittled board, and resting his head on his hand while he looked the old schoolmaster earnestly in the face.

So unusual a seriousness was there in Paul's attitude and voice, that the old man, who had a pile of books in his arms, started, and down came the dog-eared arithmetics, with a crash, to the floor.

"What can it be? Is your father ill? Are you going to leave us?" He said this with evident anxiety, and his aged hands shook as he stooped to pick up the books.

But Paul sprang forward and collected the volumes instead. Then, as he placed them on the old schoolmaster's desk, he said, with more lightness of manner, for this little accident had brought a smile to his face, "Mr. Atherton, I want to marry your daughter."

Had the emperor of China come down from the clouds, in all the glory of stiff, yellow bro-

cade, and laid his fortune at the feet of Dora, the astonishment of the simple-hearted old man could not have been greater.

"Marry my daughter!" he said, stepping back, and looking at Paul from head to foot, as if he doubted whether his young friend was crazy, or whether he was so himself.

In spite of his earnestness Paul could not help smiling again.

"Yes," he replied, "marry Dora."

The old schoolmaster pulled his spectacles down on his nose, scrutinized Paul again, and then pushed the glasses upon his forehead once more, all the time regarding his visitor earnestly. And now the tears began to gather in his dim old eyes.

"You can't be jesting—you are too generous for that," he said, at last, his voice quivering with emotion.

"God forbid!" said Paul, fervently.

"Then heaven bless you," cried the old schoolmaster, tottering forward and grasping the hand of Paul. "My Dora will have a protector when I am gone, and one whose equal, if I had searched the world over," he continued, with a voice shaking with sobs, "I could not have found."

"I love your daughter," said Paul, with feeling, "but would not speak to her of it until I had first asked your permission."

"Ask my permission?—you were sure of it, my dear boy," said the old schoolmaster, laughing through his tears. "But I never thought of such a thing—nobody could have made me believe it," he continued, looking at Paul, and crying and laughing by turns. "God bless you, my son."

The interview between Paul and Dora shall be sacred. But when Paul entered, Dora met him with a conscious blush, the result of that knowledge of herself which she had attained since their last interview; and when Paul left, hours after, it was not a blush only that attended him.

Within a week Paul departed, for his father's house; for he was a man who, having once resolved what to do, lost no time in acting. Even in that short interval he saw a marked improvement in the womanliness of Dora. Love had transformed her as if by magic. She was quieter and more subdued, yet without being less light-hearted. Is this paradoxical? Then, reader, you know nothing of love. There was a deep meaning in her eyes which Paul had never seen there before; a divine faith and affection whenever their looks met that thrilled him to his inmost soul. And yet her step, if possible, was lighter than even before, and she went about the house singing unconsciously. She was like a happy bird let loose from its cage. She lived, for that week, as it were, in a delirium of poetry.

Paul had explained to both Dora and her father

his entire dependence, for the means of a livelihood, on the elder Sidney. He had also hinted at the possibility that his parent might object to the match.

The old schoolmaster at first shook his head. He had always been a proud man, and poverty had not made him more humble.

"My child," he said, "shall enter no unwilling family. If your father refuses his sanction, neither Dora nor I wish to see you again: for her marriage with you would, in that event, be impossible, and consequently your presence would only increase her sufferings as well as yours."

But the eloquence of Paul finally prevailed, and he did not depart till he had convinced the old schoolmaster that, to separate Dora and himself, for a mere point of etiquette, would, under the circumstances, be cruel and wrong.

"I am," said Paul, "legally, as well as morally my own master. I consult my parent, because that much is his due, and because, if he consents, it will smooth many difficulties. But God forbid I should throw away a life's happiness for the whim even of a parent. If my father should object, it will be with a will as obstinate as mine—for in that one thing we resemble each other—and the consequence will be a breach between us, and my being disinherited. But even that—and the breach I shall I regret more than the disinheritance—may be a blessing in the end. I feel daily more and more that it is wrong to rust away life, as I have been doing; and some great disaster, which will rally all my energies, and spur me on to action, will do me good. Dora may not have all the luxuries, in that event, which she deserves; but the comforts I may earn for her will be the sweeter, perhaps. Will they not, Dora?"

The last words that Paul spoke, before the final farewell, were to repeat his promise to write the moment he arrived in town. "You will see me in a fortnight," he said, "whatever may happen; but you will be anxious, I hope, to hear from me at once."

The tears stood in Dora's eyes, though she tried hard to smile: but when Paul was out of sight she hurried up to her chamber and wept uncontrollably.

The first four or five days of his absence passed in comparative cheerfulness at the cottage. Both Dora and her father missed Paul more than they had thought they would; for his cheerful ways had become by this time, almost necessary to their existence. Dora looked up from her needle-work, a dozen times, as the twilight drew on, to see if Paul was in sight coming down the road; and when she remembered that he was far away, sighed, and even sometimes dropped a tear. The old schoolmaster could not

sit at his books as before Paul had come to their cottage; but would rise up, take a few steps, return to his chair, and then again rise and walk nervously about. He was now in the garden, now out in the porch, now a few paces down the road and looking toward the village; but never quiet and composed as of old. There had been a time when Dora had been sufficient for his happiness, but it was so no longer. He could not be entirely happy now without Paul, that he might converse, as they often had till the midnight moon rose over the trees, of "freewill, fixed fate, foreknowledge absolute."

Saturday night came at last, and when dinner was over, the old schoolmaster took his staff and set forth toward the village; for on that afternoon Paul's letter might be expected.

Dora knew that it would be late in the afternoon before the mail arrived, and she did not begin to be nervous, therefore, until the sun had sunk to the tree-tops behind the house. But from that time till she saw her father approach,—and she sat in the porch all the while looking down the road—her heart was in a flutter of suspense.

At last the old schoolmaster appeared, coming around the turn; and Dora, with a cry of joy, dropped her work and sprang forward to meet him.

But, as she drew near to her parent, she discerned a shade of disappointment on his face, and divining the truth she stopped tremblingly, not daring to ask him.

A melancholy shake of the head confirmed her fears. He had no letter. She burst into weeping.

"Never mind, dear," said the old man, soothingly, drawing her face to his bosom, "it will come on Monday. There has been some unavoidable delay."

So, after awhile, Dora was cheered. But it was a long while to wait until Monday—two whole days; and if it should not come then!

I am afraid our sweet Dora's thoughts often wandered, during service, on the following morning; but, on the whole, she bore the suspense heroically.

On Monday, as soon as the school was dismissed, the old man took his staff and set forth to the village again. This time, Dora's anxiety would not allow her to remain at the cottage, but she met her father in front of the old church. He was smiling as he came up, and Dora felt sure he had the letter. Alas! had her agitation permitted her to look more narrowly she would have seen that his smile was assumed to conceal from her, till the last moment, her disappointment.

"The letter," she said, eagerly, bounding forward, holding out her hand.

The truth could be no longer concealed. With a faltering voice the old schoolmaster said,

"There is no letter!"

"No letter!"

She stood like one turned to stone, yet whiter than any marble. Then she began to tremble all over.

"No letter!"

The tears came into the old man's eyes. He could not bear to see that wild look, to hear the utter agony of those tones.

"No, my child," he said, striving to comfort her, by suggesting excuses he did not believe in himself, "Paul may have found his father a little harsh, yet not angry, and may think that, by waiting a day or two, he will be able to send us final and happy news."

But Dora shook her head. And now slowly, one by one, and like the first drops of a thunder-shower, the tears began to gather in her eyes and roll heavily down her cheeks.

Yet for some minutes she could not speak. She had leaned against a tree for support, when that weakness came over her; but, at last, she recovered voice and strength. She drew her father's arm within her's and said,

"Let us go home."

And home they went, without another word being exchanged. But the thoughts of each were busy. The old man, with his better knowledge of the world—though alas! he knew but little of it after all—began to have strange suspicions; and although he dismissed them as unworthy of his generous young friend, as being temptations of Satan, they recurred again and again. But Dora had as yet only one kind of alarm. She was convinced Paul was sick. He might in fact, be dying. He must be very ill, indeed, she thought, or else he would have written.

It was a melancholy day at the cottage. The old schoolmaster tried to comfort his child, but he did it with a faint heart, for her belief in Paul's sickness was so much more consoling than his surmise, that, in charity, he resolved not to disturb her opinion. Both, however, amid their forebodings, hoped that the next evening would bring a letter.

But the next, and the next, and the next day passed, until Saturday came round again, and yet no letter arrived. Every afternoon the old schoolmaster took his staff and went into the village; and every afternoon Dora met him half-way on his return, in front of the old church. At last the villagers began to remark on the daily increasing eagerness with which the old man inquired if there was a letter for him, and on the deepening disappointment with which he turned sighing away when told that there was

none. On the last day his anxiety was so great that he was observed to tremble, and his voice shook as he repeated the question; and, on the usual answer being given, the post-master said afterward he took his hand hastily and brushed what was apparently a tear from his eye.

It was Saturday when this happened. On this day the old man had hoped that Paul would arrive in person, according to his promise; and so he had told Dora, over and over again, until she had come almost to believe it. He had started off for the village very early, and had lingered around the inn till the stage came in; and when he found that Paul was not a passenger, he had felt certain that at least there was a letter in the mail. No wonder he was almost overcome by the disappointment. No wonder that prying eyes read his sorrowing heart.

Dora, as usual, was on the look-out, near the old church, in a spot where, without being seen from the village, she could yet have her eye on her father almost from the time he left the post-office.

Her spirits fell when she beheld him emerge into sight unaccompanied; and when she noticed, as he drew nearer, his tottering gait and dejected air, she knew the worst he had to tell.

She met him, this time, on the bridge. His evident suffering made her forget, in part, her own great grief. With a woman's instinct she sought to soothe his sorrow, by hastening to join him; and the look which she gave him, as she presented him her arm, really for the moment, comforted the stricken old man.

For sorely stricken he was. All through the week, in spite of the words of hope he had uttered, the conviction had been growing stronger and stronger within him, that Paul, finding his father inexorable, had re-considered his romantic promise, and had abandoned Dora sooner than be disinherited. The ingratitude the old school-master had met with in former days, from those he had thought friends, came in aid of this opinion. And the destruction of his last hope, in the disappointment of that day, had fully convinced him of Paul's baseness.

There was little said during the walk homeward. More than once, a wrench of heart-breaking anguish brought the tears unbidden to Dora's eyes, but she hastily turned her head away in these moments of weakness, so that her father should not see her face. In other ways, too, she strove to spare him. Never had she supported his steps so tenderly, and he needed this kind of aid now, for he had broken in that single week, almost as much as in all the years Dora remembered him.

When they reached the cottage, the old school-master tottered to the first chair at hand, and sat

down shaking like one who has had the palsy. With every effort that she could make, the tears came into Dora's eyes at this sight.

"Don't fret, dear," said the old man, striving to speak firmly. "He may come yet, and if not," and here, breaking completely down, he burst into a sob, "God will temper the wind to the shorn lamb."

Dora flung herself on her knees before him.

"Don't think of me, dear father," she said. "I can bear it well enough. He is no doubt dead, or he would have got some one to write."

And, notwithstanding her heroic words just before, she, too, gave utterly away, at this, and wept aloud.

When her violence had partially abated, the old school-master spoke. He had never hinted his suspicions to Dora before, but now he thought she would be comforted a little, if she knew that her lover was false, and not dead; for he judged her proud nature by his own.

"No, he is not dead," he said, "but he has forgotten us. It is the way with the world, my child," he continued, piteously stroking her hair. "The rich soon forget the poor, the proud the humble, and the happy those who are miserable. But miserable we were not till he came among us. I was never deceived as now, though deceived often before. So generous, so noble, so superior to vulgar prejudices—and I thought too with so much firmness and such love for you. But never mind—never mind, dear child, we will be happy again, as we used to be. I will serve you as he would have done—you shan't want for that, Dora—won't we be a happy couple, your old father and you?"

Something in the tones with which he pronounced these last few words had startled Dora, even amid her misery, and she now looked hurriedly up. It was to see a strange smile on her father's face, to hear him break out immediately into immoderate laughter.

Alas! the suspense of that week, and the final disappointment of that day had unsettled his reason.

It was weeks before he recovered. He was not violent, he did not cease to know his daughter; but he laughed almost continually. He had a fancy that he was a sort of bridegroom, and that he must constantly attend on Dora; and yet, with this strange hallucination, he never forgot that she was his daughter. It was a feeling like that which we experience sometimes in a dream, when, while retaining the sense of our personal identity, we yet fancy, in a delirious way, that we are another individual.

During all this time Dora watched him incessantly. The care of her parent broke, in part, the blow of Paul's baseness; for baseness she

had come at last to consider it;—and, in this sense, the illness of the old schoolmaster was, perhaps, a blessing. For a fortnight, with some lingering remains of hope, she sent every day to the post-office, by a lad, the son of a farmer close by; but she gave up sending, satisfied she should never hear of Paul again.

It was now that her character developed itself. Thoughts deep as existence, and feelings profound as eternity were written on that countenance, which, but a few months before, was as open and as cheerful as an April sky.

One day, it was Sunday, her father woke from a long sleep, and looked around with all the old intelligence in his eye.

"Dora," he said, with a smile, raising himself, on his elbow, and looking toward where she sat gazing vaguely out of the open window.

In an instant she was at his side, delight sparkling in her eyes, for she knew by his tones, that he was sane once more.

He stared at her a full minute, in astonishment. She had changed, as we have said, and he scarcely knew her. At last he spoke, smiling,

"How much like your mother you look," he said. "I never saw you appear so much like her before. But," and here he paused, as if recollecting himself, "how long I have slept. Surely it was later in the evening, and now I recollect I was sitting in that chair. I must have slept all night and this is Sunday."

He looked at her inquiringly.

"This is Sunday," she said, almost choking. She saw that, to him, four weeks of agony had been but a day; and she blessed God for it.

"Well, be of good heart," he continued, "to-morrow will be Monday, and that will bring a letter. I know it will. My long sleep has refreshed me, and made me sanguine again. We despaired because we were worn out physically and mentally with anxiety. To-morrow—to-morrow"—and he repeated the words.

Just then, faint across the water, which, as we have said, was in full sight from the cottage, came the sound of the afternoon hymn, sung in the Methodist meeting-house near the bridge.

If my readers have ever heard a hymn, sung thus in a still afternoon, they know how inexpressibly sweet it is. The old schoolmaster caught the sounds, and his whole face brightened up. He looked at Dora, and then both listened silently. It was a hymn that spoke of the redeemed, walking by green pastures and beside pleasant waters; and the soft summer day, the bright vegetation, and the calm lake added indescribably to the effect. As it proceeded, the old schoolmaster raised his eyes to heaven, and when it ceased he murmured, vaguely,

"There the redeemed shall walk. There neither moth nor rust shall corrupt. There the saints shall receive us all. There we shall meet—wife, daughter, husband, father—and never again part. God be praised!"

He had gradually wrought himself up to a pitch of almost inspired enthusiasm, and, with his last words, he clasped both hands together and half raised himself in bed. Then, suddenly, he sank back.

Dora sprang to his side. She saw the whole terrible truth at a glance. His sudden restoration to sanity, his rapture, his fall—and, in wild words, chafing his hands the while, she besought him to speak.

"Only a word—just a blessing before you die, dear father—oh! merciful Lord, grant this petition at least."

She raised her agonized face to heaven, kneeling at the bedside, tears raining from her eyes.

All at once those dear orbs unclosed again, and the father recognized, though perhaps he did not see, his child. He felt his way feebly, with his hand to her forehead, and, while his face was irradiated as if with divine light, murmured,

"Bless you, my child—God will be a better father than I was"—and then turning his now sightless eyes above, he murmured, "come Lord Jesus, come quickly."

Again the mellow strain floated over the water, for the congregation had begun another verse; but the old schoolmaster heard it no more on earth: he was a saint in heaven.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A WINTER SCENE.

The snow lies heavy on the ground,
The frost is in the air,
The cold and biting northern wind
Finds entrance everywhere.
Leafless the ancient forest stands
Groaning like one in pain;—
Ah! when will Winter stern be o'er,
And Summer come again?

The cattle in the farm-yard stand,
Close huddled side by side;
Or look with rueful face aloft
Across the landscape wide.
The steed, to seek the frozen pump,
Awhile deserts his grain;—
Ah! when will Winter stern be o'er,
And Summer come again?

C. A.

THE VISION OF DEATH.

BY ANN S. STEPHENS.

I HAVE had a delicious dream, in which I have lived over a few hours of pleasure. With it was combined much of the poetry of sickness—much to make the heart thankful. There was pain, too, but it did not seem as such, for the sufferings of childhood may pass for the pleasures of riper age. The atmosphere was no longer moist with the morning dew, and the old oak cast its shadow along the front of our house, darkening the thick rose-bushes, and forming a cool nook for my sister's play-house, while the sun fell brightly through its outer branches and quivered over the short grass in the foreground, like threads of flexible silver weaving themselves into a groundwork of emerald green. A soft breeze was stirring, such as might draw color to the lips of an invalid without chilling his frame, while the river, as it washed its banks, and the green trees, as they swayed gently to the whispering wind, gave out a soft, sleepy sound, calculated to soothe even pain to quietness.

My father took me in his arms, and bore me carefully out into the shadow of the oak. I was in the blessed sunlight, for the first time, after six long, long weeks of illness. Oh, how deliciously the bland air came up from the river, and swept over my languid temples! What a blissful tremor ran through my form, as I was placed in the easy-chair which my mother had carefully arranged for me! A sensation of new life thrilled every nerve. I was as one lifted up from the grave into the beautiful light of heaven, the first breath of pure air came to my cheek with so sweet a touch. It seemed as if a cloud of invisible spirits were fanning me with their wings. The sluggish blood started in my veins, and thrilled me with a sensation of exquisite pleasure. The atmosphere seemed imbued with a new and more subtle property. My brain quickened—my senses drank in the perfume of the flowers that flushed the river's bank, and responded to the hum of the summer insects which haunted the rose-thickets and the honeysuckle vines, with a capacity for enjoyment which I had never experienced before. My mother carefully folded me in a cloak, and kissing me, exclaimed—"see, how the color is coming to her poor, thin cheeks."

My father met her glance of congratulation, and smiling a happy, grateful smile, looked affectionately upon me, and well he might, if he

loved his child; for while yet scarcely entering into my girlhood, I had been stricken down with a violent and dangerous illness, which had desolated many a neighboring hearthstone. For weeks, I had trembled on the brink of the grave, a long feverish dream, full of delirium and pain, had been before me, and I was but just recovering from it. With gladsome faces and half uttered blessings, my parents left me to the enjoyment of the scene. I looked eagerly abroad upon the valley. The green, heavy foliage of the pine grove across the way, shivered and thrilled to the morning air, and a whispering melody stole out, low and sad, as if the dying flowers were breathing a requiem underneath the trees. Above was the blue sky, but to my feeble vision, it seemed an ocean of silvery billows floating in dazzling masses far overhead. The brightness pained me, and I turned my eyes to the earth again. How refreshingly green it was!—and the noise of the waterfall near—how cool and melodious was its splashing music! Strange that its monotony should so have pained me during my fever.

My sisters brought out their playthings, and heaped them on the grass before me, all the while laughing and chatting so happily as they assorted them, congratulating themselves over and over that I was well enough to come out with them once more! Now and then they would look up from their playthings, dwell anxiously on my face, and ask if I were tired, or if they should play something else; then one would insist on raising the pillow a little, and would smooth my hair so kindly, while the other ran out among the rose-bushes, and tearing off the great blossoms with merciless prodigality, brought them for me to look upon. Dear sister, she little knew how faint and strengthless I was; the very roses were oppressive as they lay breathing out odor and unfolding their damask hearts in my lap.

On the opposite side of the river, a little up the rugged bank, was rooted a slender ash, and on one of the topmost boughs, was just distinguishable, among the delicate leaves, a dark object which I knew to be one of the purse-like, hanging-nests, built by the English robbin. The owner birds were fluttering about the tree with their brilliant plumage flashing in the sunlight

like a pair of tiger lilies adrift on the wind. They are scarce and beautiful birds, the very gems of the air—these English robins. I am not ornithologist enough to know if they have any other name. Their plumage is of a vivid scarlet, changing now and then, in a strong sunlight, to a flower-like tint, as if the feathers were tipped with powdered gold.

There was a spot, just beneath the tree, on which my eyes dwelt with longing intensity. It was one of those cool little hollows which we often see on a broken hill-side; the grass, to a little distance around was delightfully green, and I could just distinguish the sparkle of waters as they leaped from a little rocky basin, and trickled down the bank, giving freshness and life to the herbage in their pathway. It was for that bright water which I thirsted with an absorbing desire. There it was, leaping and flashing, as if in mockery before my eyes; I could almost hear it murmuring under the grass with that soft liquid flow which seems almost to quench thirst with its very melody, and yet it was forbidden to me. Our doctor was a man of much knowledge—a successful practitioner, but, possessed of inveterate prejudices, he strictly prohibited water in all cases of fever. He was as stubborn a water-hater as Mr. Willis' Tomaso; one would have thought that like him, he suspected, that "since the world was drowned in it, it has tasted of sinners," and that his patients might be tainted with it. Be this as it may, he would as soon have administered a dose of prussic acid, as a spoonful of the pure element to one suffering under the disease that was ravaging our neighborhood. Through six long weeks of parching fever, I had tasted water only once. That once—it almost makes me smile to think of it—the girl, in her haste to obey a summons from my sick room, had placed a brimming ewer on the carpet. All day I had been praying for water. One drop—one little drop was all I asked, but it was denied to me. I was alone, burning with thirst, restless with feverish pain, and there, a few yards from me, stood the forgotten ewer, with the coveted moisture dripping drop by drop over its sides. In the phrenzy of desire I crept from my bed and dragged myself along the floor, till the delicious beverage was gained. I lifted my reeling head, seized the vessel, and drank—oh, with what intoxicating delight! Could I have coined each drop into a diamond at the moment, I would not have thus enriched myself. I remember it all as a dream, but it was a moment of delicious pleasure. I would almost suffer the same privation to taste such happiness again. When the servant returned, she found me lying satiated and asleep—asleep by the half empty ewer, with my night-clothes lying wet about me,

and the carpet under my head saturated with the water, spilt in my eagerness to drink. The poor girl was dreadfully frightened; a sound rating from "the doctor," and perhaps a trial for manslaughter, were the most gentle consequences her imagination taught her to expect from her negligence. After sobbing and wringing her hands most tragically for a season, she changed my clothes, placed me in bed again, and like a wise girl, resolved to keep her own council in the affair. That night she was a faithful watcher, and I had a long, refreshingsleep. The next morning found me much better, which the good doctor pronounced as the result of some half-dozen powders which *were* to have been taken in roasted apple during the night.

From the day of my stolen indulgence, to the time when they carried me into the open air for the first time, water had been carefully excluded from my room. Is it to be wondered at, then, that the "Rock Spring," with its bright grass and pure waters, should be the first object to fix my attention? My second sister followed the direction of my eyes, and understood their longing expression.

"You may have some—you shall. I will run and ask mother," she exclaimed, pushing a heap of muslin and silk pieces—an elder-wood pin-case, and a half-dressed doll out of her lap, and jumping up, ran into the house. Directly she appeared with her pink sun-bonnet on, and a pitcher in her hand.

"You may have some drink—mother says you may. I am going after it. I'll dip it out of the very coldest part of the basin, and bring a lot of pepper-mint and sweet flag-root with it!"—her cheerful voice was lost on the air as she darted through the gate and over the old wooden bridge toward the "Rock Spring."

A few moments, and she came running back with her bonnet hanging to her neck by the strings, her generous, bright face all in a glow, and the water dashing over her hands at each bounding step.

"Here, drink, drink!" she said, eagerly, holding the pitcher to my mouth—"drink quick—quick! for the doctor is coming!"

A few drops from the offered vessel were enough to satisfy my cravings. The fever had left me, and it was rather from a wish for the taste of water, than from any unnatural thirst, that I had so desired a draught from the spring.

The tramp of a horse, steady and sedate in his movements, was heard on the bridge.

"There he comes! there he comes!" cried my kind sister, half-frightened out of her wits and snatching the pitcher from my lips, she darted into the house. I, too, started forward in my chair, and would have followed her, but

the effort overcome my feeble strength. I fell back faint and panting for breath. Tramp—tramp—tramp, came the sound of hoofs over the bridge, then the noise was broken by the gravel at the end, and just underneath the boughs of the old chestnut, which stood there like a veteran sentinel, guarding the pass, appeared "our doctor."

Our doctor was a character odd and droll as a character ought to be. He and his horse had grown old with the village. For ten miles around, he reigned a perfect medical despot. There was not a child in the neighborhood who would not run away and hide itself like a frightened part-ridge at the very sight of his saddle-bags. One might well have judged of his character as he, emerging from under the chestnut, mounted on a piece of living antiquity in the shape of a venerable horse, whose gaunt frame looked as if it had been fed on its master's refuse medicines. The poor beast had been a patriarch of the plough, and like many wiser animals, never could forget his old vocation. His propensities were always earthward; everything about him drooped, from the grisly hair hanging over his hoofs, to the long foretop, which streamed like an Indian's scalp over his meagre face and bleary eye. I must except his mane, for that could not be said to have any propensity. It was so matted together with burs, that it was difficult to guess of what material it was formed. Nothing could have harmonized better than the horse and his accoutrements. The bridle had been stiffened with rain and sunshine till it rattled against the poor beast's neck at every footfall; the saddle was old—worn and discolored; while the leather saddle-bags, which contained half the contents of an apothecary's-shop, seemed a part and parcel of the beast, so admirably did they correspond with his sides, which had lost most of their hairy coating in the agricultural service before mentioned. But the doctor—I cannot say that he looked exactly like his horse, though, in some things, there certainly was a resemblance. The doctor was about forty, very lean, and crippled in both his legs. His horse, if we may judge from appearances, was nearly the same age, blind of one eye, with a form guiltless of more flesh than was absolutely necessary to hold his rickety joints together. The doctor always affirmed that his beast, though rather rough in the exterior, knew more than most men; while everybody said that his master was as odd as odd could be, and as ugly in face and person as a man might reasonably wish to be, had his ambition in that line been ever so great, but that there was not a physician in the county could compete with him in medical skill. It would be unjust to draw a parallel between the doctor and

his horse, farther than the corporeal portion of man and beast was concerned, for notwithstanding his antipathy to cold water, the doctor was uncommonly skilful in his profession, had received an unexceptionable diploma from the medical board in New Haven, and was, moreover, a man of vast general knowledge; but I never could learn that the horse had ever been honored with a diploma, or was, in any way, remarkable for scientific remark. Let this be as it may, it cannot be denied that master and beast could not be more completely created for each other, than were the doctor as we have described him, in his ill-made clothes and huge bear-skin cap, which gave his head much the appearance of a black wasp's nests, and the ugly animal on which he usually appeared, with his crutches crossed on his saddle-bow, and his withered legs dangling over the store of medicines packed in his saddle-bags.

I know that it is very uncivil to leave the learned physician so long under the chestnut, but it would be an aggravation of the offence had the character of so important a functionary been left to conjecture. Well, he rode majestically toward the house, and after dismounting with some difficulty, placed his saddle-bags over one arm, and his crutches under both, and advanced into the yard. When he saw me sitting in the easy-chair, with my sister's playthings scattered about me, he stopped short, and planting his crutches deep in the grass, called out—

"Halloo, you young chatterbox—how came you here; does that obstinate woman want to kill you?"

I stammered out something about my parents having brought me there.

"More fools they. You'll catch cold, and if you do you'll die, I can tell them that, but it'll serve them right—for what business had they to let you come out till they had asked me, I should like to know? But you'll die, and I shan't pity them—a pack of fools!"

A cold chill crept over me at his repetition of the words "you will die." The tears started to my eyes in spite of a strong effort to prevent them, and shuddering with fear, I closed my eyes on the beautiful green earth with a feeling of painful and sudden dread—the dread of death; oh, what a host of terrible and tender feelings are intermingled in that fear! The doctor raised his crutches and hobbled a step nearer than he was, doubtless, softened by the sudden palor that settled on my face.

"Don't cry, little chatterbox," he said, patting my head with his little bony hand, "don't cry, we shall raise you yet, I rather guess, but I wouldn't have given fourpence for you, three weeks ago. There, there, you little fool, don't

sob so; you'll make yourself sick again. I did not mean to frighten you, but here shall be no neglect; I——"

He broke off suddenly, drew back the hand with which he had been patting my head, and passing it over his eyes, muttering—

"My poor Therese. If I had given half as much care to her, as I have to you, she would have been alive now."

I looked up; the doctor's face was eloquent with grief, and a tear stood on his lean cheek. Poor man! though odd and eccentric, he had a heart. Therese was his eldest child—a sweet, gentle and most loving creature. A few weeks previous to my illness, she had complained of headache and dullness for several days in succession. Her father, who was more than commonly engaged in his profession, considered her indisposition as light, and neglected the first symptoms of fever till they gained a strength that baffled even his great skill. His first born died—died by her father's negligence. The poor man felt it to his heart's core. No wonder that the tears started to his eyes when he contrasted my convalescence with her death.

The doctor was, by far, too odd a man to indulge in genuine feeling for more than a moment. Wiping his eyes, he resumed his usual half comic expression, and called for my mother in a voice that brought all the inmates of the house rushing to the door, for they supposed that I must have fainted, or died, perhaps, in my chair.

"Take that young one into the house!" vociferated he, pointing to the door with his crutch, "take her up and put her in bed; ten chances to one she has caught her death by your folly, and if she escapes, there'll be no thanks to you for it, I can tell you."

My mother strove in vain to convince him that she acted by his orders in conveying me into the air, which, indeed, was true. Nothing would pacify him, but he insisted that I must be carried to bed; so I was taken, terrified and weak from apprehensions excited by the physician, and carried to my sick room again. The doctor left me some quieting-drops, and departed. I felt a sensation of relief when the solemn tramp of his old horse again struck on my ear as he stalked over the bridge; and when the noon passed without bringing any of the unfavorable symptoms which would have been the effect of a sudden cold, the apprehensions which had chilled my heart died away, and I slept.

When I awoke, the purple glow of sunset filled my room, the windows of which opened toward Tall's Hill. The curtains were drawn back, and the hill with its taper steeple and white houses, imbedded and half-concealed by numerous trees, lay before me, mellowing in the crimson haze of

a warm sunset. A soft misty gloom lay along the ground, and in the bosom of the trees, while the church-window seemed burnished into sheet gold, so strongly did they reflect the dying light. A few still, melancholy moments, and the purple gloom had darkened the whole picture, save where the flashing sunbeams played brightly around the glittering church-vane and slowly disappeared. Then night came on. One lone, bright star stole out, and trembled over my mother's grave. I knew that it was her resting-place on which the light slept, for I could distinguish the marble slabs, imbedded as they were in the gathering gloom. Oh, how solemn and melancholy were my feelings, as I lay with my eyes fixed on that bright star, shedding its purple tranquil light over the place of the dead—it was so pure, so heavenly! The tears rolled over my cheeks as I gazed, and sweet, mysterious thoughts came thronging in my brain, one after another, till my heart grew faint with the excess of its own sensations. Another and another star came out, till the whole firmament glowed as with a shower of brilliants. Slowly they seemed melting one into another—that lone, beautiful star and all—and I was asleep again.

My next waking was deep in the night. The room was dark, and I felt a sensation of fatigue and pain, which instantly convinced me that I had taken cold. The doctor's words came to my mind; my heart died within me, and I cowered beneath the bed-clothes in a painful fit of coughing. The darkness was appalling; my cough became more and more violent, and I felt as if the hand of death was already upon me. My thoughts became strangely solemn, and I murmured to myself as one in a dream, "and must I die so young, when life is so very sweet? Must I close my eyes forever on the bright and beautiful earth, when but just returned to it from the portals of the tomb? Will that pale star rise year after year and tremble over my grave also, when I shall be laid beside my mother in the cold, damp charnel-house of nature—that mother who died in my early infancy, and left me to the generous care of one who had cherished me even as if I had been her own child." These were sad bitter thoughts, but I could not escape them; the doctor's words rung in my ears like the denunciations of a prophet. "If you catch cold." I felt that I had caught cold, and that I must die. Slow and solemn thoughts of dissolution passed by me like spectres treading to the music of a dirge. My funeral seemed to pass in mournful review. The little coffin with its velvet pall, and myself lying pale and cold in the snow-white shroud, as I had seen poor Therese, with all the habiliments of mourning, marshaled themselves in my excited brain. The darkness

around seemed an immense curtain of black, enveloping me in its folds, and shutting me out from the earth forever. Death! death! Oh, what a chill came over me as I whispered the dread word again and again in the agony of my fear. Then came more tender thoughts—thoughts of my sisters and of their grief when they should see me cold and dead. I could almost hear them weeping and mourning over me; then appeared the pale faces of my father and of my dear step-mother; they were full of settled grief. The dark picture was too distinct for my excited imagination. I thought my heart was breaking, and sobbed and wept in my bed, till I lay strengthless and utterly exhausted, with my face buried in the damp pillow, and my trembling limbs bathed in the dew of mingled weakness and agony.

I know not whether I fainted or slept; but there was a time of oblivion, and then a strain of sweet, wild music came floating through the room, and I felt the light of a new day steal over my closed eyelids. I lay thus, a moment, between wakefulness and slumber, then a shadow broke the imperfect light, and a soft kiss was pressed on my forehead. It was my mother; she had stolen to my bed-side at the first dawn of day, to inquire how I had rested. Her cheerful face brought new hope to my heart, and I was ashamed to inform her how much I had suffered

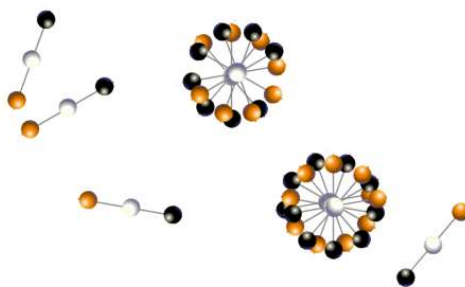
during the night. She drew back the curtains and raised me that I might look out on the dewy earth. The rosy light was kissing every green thing into new beauty, and the old oak waved its boughs, and rustled cheerfully in the morning breeze.

"There, do you hear that?" said my mother, as the bird, whose music had disturbed me, sent forth a succession of wild, sweet notes from the bosom of the tree. "You shall go out again to-day, when the grass is dry."

I looked anxiously in her face, and ventured to say, "but, mother, are you sure that I have not taken cold? I coughed very badly in the night."

"Cold, no, dear. You will be all the better for a little fresh air. You were tired, that was all."

My heart leaped; I felt as if snatched from the coffin, and flinging my arms about my mother's neck, I wept, and told her all. She pitied and soothed me in her own kind way, bade me try to sleep again, and promised that I should go out to play with my sisters, notwithstanding the doctor's predictions, and so I did, that day and the next—and the next again. Our doctor growled and scolded, and flourished his crutch most magnificently when he came to visit me, but my mother took it all very quietly; she was a woman—and women will have their way—when they can.



THE MOTHER'S SACRIFICE.

A STORY OF THE SOUTH.

BY ANGELE DE V. HULL.

It was on a lovely evening, in the year 1781, that a lonely horseman wound his way through the beautiful valley in which stood the dwelling of Major Lindsay, one of the best and bravest that struggled for our country's freedom, in that fearful contest of right against wrong.

The traveller came slowly on, and the expression of his countenance, one of doubt and misgiving, seemed to deepen as the distance lessened between him and his place of destination. He was the bearer of tidings to the owner of the wide plantations before him—tidings which he knew would tear from a nearly desolate home its sole remaining hope. No wonder then that he drew up his reins, and paused to cast his eye over the fair prospect before him, as if to gather courage in the contemplation of its rare beauty.

The tops of the trees were covered with the golden sunshine, bringing to light their various shades of green from the darkest to the most delicate, while through the wide spreading branches of some the bright rays peered and glittered like spots of fire on the thickly shaded surface. High in the deep woods clambered light and graceful vines, now clinging as if in terror to the mighty oak, now trailing to the ground like weeping, deserted things, and now as if in sport thrown across the road from one tree top to another like an arch of hope over the heads below. Flowers grow on either side in rich profusion like troops of gaily dressed fairies, nodding their graceful heads to the wind, but there were no light and busy feet to press them as of yore, no little hands to cull them for mimic crowns in all their childish games. But one was left of the merry band that gamboled over those now lonely woods, and called forth the echoes to their shouts of mirth—but one was left, the last of five brave youths that went forth to die upon the battle-field.

Cultivation lent its beauty to the scene. Far and near, over one side, reached the rich and varied regiments of corn, their green banners waving with the breeze; on they stretched over hill and valley to the level ground, and far into the forest shade: on the other stood the old grey rocks like staunch sentinels from the mountains that rose above all. A clear stream wound lovingly around the fields and woods, now sending its band of crystal to the lowlands, and now

leaping down some high hill like the foamy brook of Undine.

Beyond lay the picturesque dwelling of Major Lindsay, and thither the horseman bent his way, as the lengthening shadows warned him of the hour. In the avenue leading to the house he was met by a silver-haired old man, who came forward with the activity of youth to his rencontre.

"What news, Wilson?—what news?" cried he, eagerly.

"I have letters for you, major," was the reply, as the traveller dismounted and grasped the outstretched hand.

They reached the house in silence, and passing the main building entered an apartment in one of the wings. A few antiquated chairs ranged formally around the walls, and one with a high back and spectre like arms placed before a table covered with papers, completed the furniture. Over the mantel-piece hung an officer's belt and a broken sword, while below lay the scabbard beaten almost into shapelessness. Near it stood a handleless cup of costly china, a treasure to the mother of the dead boy whose lips had pressed it; and a hunting-horn of rare carving with a small silver flask curiously fashioned, lay together in mournful disuse as relics of those that were gone.

Wilson had scarcely time to seat himself before the impatient old soldier claimed his despatches. Hurriedly he broke the seals, and with many and frequent exclamations rapidly devoured their contents.

"Great God of heaven! Hayne put to death! without a trial! The villains! the blood-thirsty villains! Oh, Wilson!" said the agitated man, laying his hand upon his arm, "was nothing done to save him?"

"Everything, my dear sir, everything. A deputation of the loyalists, with the governor at their head, petitioned Lord Rawdon and the commandant in vain. They resisted alike the petitions of the most distinguished women in Charleston, and the piercing cries of Hayne's wife and children. He died as he had lived bravely and honorably, a victim to the fury of a conquered enemy. His death will be long remembered and well avenged."

"Poor fellow! poor fellow!" said the major, sighing deeply, and taking up another letter that remained unread. Slowly he scanned its contents, for his heart was heavy with grief.

But he soon looked up, and turning to his companion grasped his hand. "Greene is on the heights of the Santee, strengthening his army and disciplining a new corps. The time is come, Wilson, my gallant boy is needed, and he must leave us. Would to God that I had others to aid their suffering country!"

"Your sacrifices have surely been great enough, my dearest sir," said Wilson, in a low voice, remembering the agony that had wrung the souls of the bereaved parents as they learned the death of the young soldiers, one after the other.

"Ay! four brave boys have fallen, struggling for their country's freedom. They left their quiet home never to return. But they died nobly, and God's will be done. They were not mine, but the nation's. My duty is not yet fulfilled. With the health and strength that Providence has given us, we should be the first to meet the cannon's roar. Arthur must go, and he is ready."

But the voice of the high-souled father faltered as he raised his eyes to the broken sword above him, and he paused in his agitation to wipe his brow. His countenance had passed successively through the various degrees of that smothered emotion which becomes only more violent with the effort to control it. At first he had been intensely pale, and his eyes were moist; now he stood with clasped hands before his companion, who watched him with a mixture of tenderness and anxiety clearly visible upon his countenance as he, too, glanced upon the gathered remembrances of those whose places were never to be re-filled.

A low knock was heard, and a servant entered to announce supper. Leaning upon Wilson's arm, the major proceeded slowly to the dining-room. No one was there but the domestic in attendance.

"My mistress is in the avenue with Master Arthur, sir," said he, respectfully.

"Then call them again, Mathew; it is late for your mistress to be out. And Wilson," continued his host, turning to him, "after supper you will tell them the news you brought to me. Alas! I fear its effect upon my poor Margaret."

Wilson turned away, and gazed around the room. It was neither cheerful-looking nor ornamental, but its aspect desolate and gloomy, as though it mourned the absence of the gay voices that had once enlivened its walls. The small table before him had been substituted for the one at which four youthful forms were once seated. Their chairs stood in mournful array at one end of the room, and the bright, heavy

silver service, whose grotesque reflections had so often excited the mirth of the happy children to whose manhood the strife of nations had been so fatal, now gave back but one young face, whose habitual seriousness, borrowed from the wrinkled brows forever before him, was almost painful to behold.

The door opened, and Mrs. Lindsay entered, leaning on the arm of her noble-looking son. She appeared to be but little more than forty years of age, tall, pale and delicate. She had once been beautiful, the traces of former loveliness remained, and it was easy to see that sorrow had dimmed it all. She advanced slowly, and, making an effort to smile, welcomed her husband's faithful agent in a voice remarkable for its sweetness. She was in deep mourning, and a slight negligence in the careful arrangement of her dress was a touching proof of a mind forever occupied with the intensity of its grief.

Arthur Lindsay was just eighteen, full of enthusiastic devotion to his country, and a desire to distinguish himself in the glorious cause. He conducted his mother to her place, and turned to shake Wilson by the hand.

The meal passed almost in silence; each one was busied with his own thoughts, and forgot to speak to the other. At a sign from Major Lindsay Wilson proceeded to comply with his request, and watched its effect upon the mother and the son as he unfolded the result of his late journey.

Arthur started up, his cheek glowing with patriotic fire, and uttered incoherent exclamations, in which indignation and joy were mingled. He felt that the time had come when he, too, must sally forth upon the battle-field, or find a resting place with his young brothers. His handsome face grew radiant with enthusiasm as his father drew forth the letter of General Greene and read it aloud, and the tears rolled over those blooming cheeks as he heard the wish for fresh troops therein expressed.

His father gazed tenderly and proudly upon his son, and turned to his wife.

"What think you of all this, Margaret?"

"That it will bring despair to many a mother's heart," replied Mrs. Lindsay, looking with heart-rending emotion upon her excited boy. "I can see it in no other light, my friends."

"It is to obtain peace, Margaret, that every struggle is made; and even if it were otherwise, we should rejoice that our countrymen will not dishonor their arms."

"What is all this to me now?" cried Mrs. Lindsay, letting her tearful eyes rest upon the four empty chairs at the end of the apartment.

"Alas! these dreadful wars would have ended long ago, had we been enabled to do so honorably," said Wilson, compassionately. "But who

would have us purchase peace on any other terms?"

"How I long to join my heroic countrymen!" cried Arthur, eagerly.

"It is a happiness you will soon enjoy, my son," replied his father, with no less enthusiasm. "We shall soon set out to join Greene—a few days more, and——"

"A few days more!" exclaimed the mother, wildly, and rising from her seat. "What are you going to do with my son? Tell me!—tell me! I insist upon it!"

Her husband sought to calm her, but she repulsed him. "I will follow you until I drop dead with weariness. Then, perhaps, you will pause in your journey."

"But, madam," said Wilson, trying to soothe her, "a young man should see something of the world."

"The world!" murmured she, sinking back into her chair. "My other sons, too, saw the world." She covered her face with her hands.

"They belonged to the army, Margaret," said her husband, gently; "would you have had them desert their post?"

"Mother, have you no regard for my honor?" said Arthur, whose interest in this struggle was fearfully painful.

Mrs. Lindsay looked at her son with a face of agony he could never forget, but said nothing.

"Listen to me, my dear Margaret," said Major Lindsay, motioning Arthur to silence. "It may not be necessary for our son to be exposed to a battle. What if the struggle be ended ere we reach the banks of the Santee? I do not wish Arthur to seem less brave than his brothers, and if he is indeed obliged to become a soldier like them, I will accompany him and watch over our boy."

"And is that the consolation you have to give me?" said Mrs. Lindsay, in mournful despair. "You will make me hate my country, Frederick, you will make me regret that I was born here where my sacrifices have been so dreadful. Go, then, go! since you think my mother heart has not been sufficiently torn; since you do not think me lonely enough in losing four sons out of the five that God had given me; go, and if you find me a corpse on your return you will still be happier than I, who have no tomb over which I can weep!"

And rising once more, Mrs. Lindsay left the room, giving utterance to shrieks that smote the hearts of those who remained behind.

A long and painful silence followed; then, meeting his father's tearful gaze, Arthur threw himself into his arms.

"I have kept my promise, my son, you see what it costs me. Your mother will die of grief."

"We will soon return to console her, father. She will not die, for she will think of us."

"I hope so, Arthur. God grant that we return not too late, she has been already so cruelly bereaved. And now, my son, remember that I excuse no rashness on your part, no tempting of Providence. Be firm, be brave, but not fool-hardy. The loss of your four elder brothers authorizes me to demand this of you. For your mother's sake expose not your precious life in any vain attempts to acquire glory."

"My father would not have me like a timid, shrinking girl," said Arthur, whose cheeks had flushed painfully while his father spoke.

"I would have you do your duty, my son, and sustain the honor of your name. Now go and join your mother, and do your best to tranquilize her. I will come to you in a few moments, and we will unite in our efforts to console her."

"My dear sir, my honored friend," said Wilson, as the youth left the room, "I did not wish to sustain Mrs. Lindsay in her resistance to your wishes, but now that we are alone nothing can prevent my telling you that you are doing more than your duty to your country by giving up this last and only child. Four sons have fallen on the field of battle. Four sons in four years! Surely, surely, there is no other family in which such an example occurs; wherein the debt to our fatherland has been so generously paid!"

"You deceive yourself, Wilson," was the reply. "There are many who have suffered like ourselves. I cannot believe that I have given an example."

"But Arthur is the last of his race—if he should fall?"

"God's will be done, Wilson. If my race becomes extinct it will have fulfilled its mission to the last; and I would rather that it disappear with a gleam of light than that it should be preserved through an act of cowardice."

"But it could not be deemed cowardice, when, after losing four brave sons, you should wish to save the fifth—the last."

"I endeavored to persuade myself of that, my friend, but as often as I did so I felt such a contempt for my own weakness that it served only to convince me that the last drop of our blood belonged to us no more than the first."

There was nothing further to oppose, and Wilson demanded an account of his administration of affairs during Major Lindsay's absence.

"Let everything go on as usual, Wilson. Receive my income, but force none to pay where they are involved. Give to those who are in need, and employ the idle. Give plentifully, and seek out those that have suffered in the wars. Comfort my wife, and raise her drooping spirits with what encouragement you can. Alas! when

our eldest boy left his home she blessed him and bade him go forth to his country's aid. Proudly and firmly she saw him depart, but from the fatal hour in which the news of his death reached us, she never raised her head. Poor Margaret! Poor desolate mother! But our country, Wilson, our country! Is not hers a parent's cause? Had not I been forced to remain inactive from my severe wounds, still painful as age creeps on, one more stout hand would have struck a blow at the chains that have galled us. But I am keeping you from your rest. Good night, and God bless you!"

It was some time after the events above related, that Major Lindsay and his son arrived, tired and exhausted, at the encampment of General Greene. It was a scene of the liveliest interest to both, as they beheld before them the moving mass that was stretched over the field, and Arthur held out his hand to his father and grasped his in silent thankfulness at the prospect that was before him of winning renown and glory with his maiden sword. But as Major Lindsay beheld the hard weather-beaten faces and muscular forms of the men now going through the manœuvres with which Greene incessantly occupied them, endeavoring to discipline his new corps and perfect the old one, he turned to his slender, graceful-looking boy with a deep sigh, and a prayer for his future safety.

But they were soon recognized, and their little band, a few recruits from the neighborhood of Valley Farm, received with demonstrations of joy that recompensed them for the fatigues they had undergone.

They were conducted to General Greene, who welcomed his old companion in arms with some emotion. He gazed upon the youth at his side with a look of kindness and sadness blended, and held his hand for some time before speaking.

"Ah, Lindsay!" he exclaimed, at length, "it were better to perpetuate a race like yours, and marry this last scion of a brave and noble stock to one of our true-hearted countrywomen."

"I am married, sir—to my country," interrupted Arthur, with glowing cheeks. "And show me a better bride for an American soldier!"

"Full of the good old blood!" cried Greene, smiling approvingly. "You are already prepared for action, my gallant boy, and the time is near at hand. The weather is becoming less scorching, and I am about to march forward to expel the red coats from the towns they still hold, and shall not use much ceremony in requesting them to leave Charleston."

The eyes of young Lindsay sparkled at this information, and he eagerly demanded his place among the ranks wherein he was to strike his first blow for liberty and the country.

"You shall be near me, my good Arthur; an army of brave youths like you would soon terminate the war; and I need not tell you, my young friend, that to be brave it is not necessary to be rash. Remember this for your father's sake."

Arthur bowed in silence, and turning to his father grasped his hand affectionately. There needed no promise from the lips to make this tacit one more sacred, and Major Lindsay returned the pressure of his son's hand with equal tenderness.

"General," said he, after a pause, "remember, too, that my place is near my boy wherever he may be."

"Your place, Lindsay! Great God! have you returned to the fight with your unhealed wounds?"

"While there is a drop of blood left me it belongs to my native land," was the reply; "and I have promised his mother," pointing to Arthur, and lowering his voice, "to watch over him now as she did while he slumbered an infant in his cradle."

"Alas, poor lady!" said Greene, compassionately. "How fared she, Lindsay, when you left her?"

"Badly enough, my friend," said the major, falteringly. "But in spite of her breaking heart and her heavy grief, when she learned that her son must leave her, she arose with the dawn to see him go, blessed him, and bade him preserve the honor of his name. With all her woman's tears she, too, would fight for the nation, did chance require it."

"I believe it, indeed!" cried Greene, with enthusiasm. "A high-souled American woman, or she would not have sent so fearless a band into the country. God grant her happiness in the end!"

Arthur walked away and joined a group of soldiers that had gathered near, and by his frank and winning ways soon made friends among them. The two elders continued for some time in earnest conversation, and then proceeded to the general's tent, where the weary traveller sought rest after the fatigues of travelling. Nature proved stronger than her subject's will, and while he sank back into a deep and refreshing sleep his companion left him to prepare his army for a march toward the Congaree.

Arthur Lindsay contemplated the busy scene with feelings of rapture. He was at length "in his own place." His fellow soldiers passed to and fro before him full of light words and gay jests for the new-comer. The white tents disappeared, the ranks were again formed, and silence succeeded to the hum of many voices. The word of command was heard over the plain, uttered in a clear, loud tone; the roll of the drums sounded, and when the brave old soldier awoke,

strengthened by his slumber, it was to mount his horse and follow the circuitous route that led them to their place of destination, near the confluence of the two rivers, Santee and Congaree.

They passed the upper Congaree, and rapidly descended the right bank with the intention of attacking the enemy, who were stationed at Macord's Ferry, under the command of Colonel Stewart.

The royalists seeing the approach of an army so superior in force, and especially in cavalry, reflected that they were too remote from Charleston, whence they drew their subsistence. They hastened, therefore, to quit Macord's Ferry, and fell back upon Eutaw Springs, where they labored to entrench themselves. Greene pursued them thither and prepared for battle.

The vanguard was composed of the militia of the two Carolinas, and the centre of the regular troops of those provinces, of Virginia and Maryland. Colonel Lee with his legion covered the right flank, and Colonel Henderson the left. The rearguard consisted of the dragoons of Colonel Washington and the militia of Delaware. It was a corps of reserve destined to support the first lines. The artillery advanced upon their front.

The British commander formed his troops in two lines: the first was defended on the right by the little river Eutaw, and on the left by a thick wood. The second, forming a reserve, crowned the heights which command the Charleston road. After some skirmishing between the marshmen of the one and the other army, they fell back behind the ranks, and the engagement became general. It was supported for a considerable time with balanced success, but at length the militia from Charleston were broken and retired in disorder. The British division which formed the left of the first line quitted its position to pursue them. In this movement it lost its distances, and could no longer combat in company with the other part of the line.

This was an advantage to the American army, and Greene lost no time in benefiting by it. Followed by young Arthur Lindsay, who had been fighting like a lion, he pushed forward his second line.

"Charge, my men, charge!" shouted he, waving his sword, and leading on; "now is our time; do your duty bravely! Ha, Lindsay, that was well done, my boy!" continued he, as he watched his young companion rush forward and renew the attack so vigorously that the English began to retreat in confusion. The charge was so furious and so sudden that the royalists were completely terror-stricken.

"Ho, Lindsay!" cried Greene, as Arthur stood over a British officer, commanding him to surrender, "speed through the lines as swiftly as

you can and tell Lee to turn his cavalry to the left and fall upon the rear of the enemy. Tell him to lose no time, as with a good manoeuvre he may finish routing them."

The captured royalist gave a groan as he heard this order, and Arthur flew to obey it. Regardless of the fire to which he was exposed, he sped on, and delivering his message returned to take his place near Greene.

In a short time the flight of all that wing of the British army took place. The right held bravely on, but Greene ordered it to be attacked in front by the Maryland and Virginia troops, the cavalry of Colonel Washington charging it in the flank. The confusion then became general, and the royalist army fell one over the other in their endeavors to recover their intrenchments.

But although victory appeared to be in the hands of the Americans, the English troops, accustomed to a rigid discipline, were able to rally in their disorder, and threw themselves into a strong house, determined to make a desperate defence. Here the action re-commenced more obstinately than at first. The Americans strove with the utmost valor to force the enemy from their posts. Their efforts were vain, and the English repulsed them with severe loss. Colonel Washington was wounded and taken, and around the house the slaughter was terrible.

Colonel Stewart, rallying his right wing, pushed forward against the left flank of the American army. Greene then felt persuaded that to continue the conflict would be to waste torrents of blood, and he retreated to his first encampment, carrying off five hundred prisoners and nearly all his wounded.

By his side rode Arthur Lindsay, his left arm badly wounded, and the brave old major, who took part in the conflict, following his son through the thickest of the fight, and cheering the weary men when it became more fierce.

The meeting between the father and son when all was over proved one of the most affecting nature, and when at length the old soldier fell asleep, after the excitement of the day, it was with his arms clasped around his noble boy.

The encomiums of his general were not the only reward the young soldier received. Public thanks were voted to those who had been actors in the battle of Eutaw Springs, and Greene himself was presented with a conquered standard and a medal of gold. He took occasion at that time to mention the services of those who had distinguished themselves by gallant conduct, and among the most conspicuous stood the son of his old and tried friend. They were not forgotten, as we shall see.

Reinforcements were received a short time after, and the republicans once more turned their

arms against the English in South Carolina. Their appearance caused them to leave the open country, and intrench themselves in Charleston, sending out scouts and foraging parties that were forever repulsed by Greene and his brave band. In this manner the American general put an end to the war at the south, and in the meantime young Arthur received the welcome news of his promotion. A prouder father than his could scarce be found, and the heart of the eager youth beat impatiently for another opportunity of acquiring glory.

Virginia was not so fortunate as Carolina. As if to render his name more odious to the Americans, Arnold carried fire and sword wherever he went. The British generals were endeavoring by this to divert our attention from the south, hoping to divide the American forces there.

An engagement took place between Arbuthnot and the French fleet, in which, although the losses were equal, the latter returned to Rhode Island, relinquishing their design, which was to cut off the retreat of Arnold from the Chesapeake. Lafayette failed in reaching Petersburg before the English general, who there took command of all the British forces. Virginia became the seat of war.

We will pass over a part of our history, with which every American is familiar, and beg our readers to follow our young hero, who had returned to his native state, hoping that he might be enabled once more to embrace his now proud mother, and lay his laurels at her feet. But events were thickening, and after many opportunities of winning more renown, he succeeded in joining Washington, who, refusing to notice the brutal conduct of the British in Connecticut, drew all his forces into Virginia, knowing that whoever should triumph at Yorktown would decide the whole campaign.

The English had surrounded it with fortifications of various kinds, but there was but small space within, and little safety afforded the garrison. Even the earthen works around the opposite village of Gloucester, and the artillery placed there, were of no importance.

The Americans, through the violent fire of the besieged, erected their batteries and covered them with a hundred pieces of heavy ordnance. The guns of the enemy were soon silenced, and many of their defences ruined. Cornwallis was strongly urged to retreat, but persisted in remaining behind walls that were indefensible. An attack was made, and while the Americans, under Lafayette, advanced upon the right redoubt, the French had charge of the other. Both were gained, and Washington presented to two of the French regiments the cannon they had taken.

After many and various repulses, in which

even the elements assisted, Cornwallis sent a flag to Washington, requesting a cessation of arms for twenty-four hours, and an appointment of commissioners for arranging the terms of capitulation. But two hours only were granted, and, after objections on both sides, the British general and the future president of his country agreed to terms.

The news of so glorious and important a victory resounded exultingly throughout America. The names of Washington, Lafayette, Rochambeau and De Grasse echoed far and near, never to be forgotten. Thanks were addressed to generals, officers and soldiers, and young Lindsay, covered with honors, prepared to return home, where he had entreated his father to remain during the rest of the struggles. With the praises of Washington still in his ears, the grasp of his hand still felt within his own, he mounted his horse a brave and well-tried soldier, worthy the gratitude of his now free country and of the sword he wore.

It was a bleak and chilly day in autumn that he reached the valley in which he was born. Wilson and the devoted but now nearly helpless father had advanced to meet him, one not less eager than the other for the first glance of the eagle-eyed young hero.

At length he came, and scarce a word passed ere they reached the house, so full were the three hearts that beat rapidly and gratefully at the wanderer's return. But when, with a cry of joy, Arthur beheld his mother, and sprung forward to meet her, the soldier was forgotten in the son. Tears rolled down his manly face, and from that mother's heart passed every pain as she clung in speechless delight to her only, her last child.

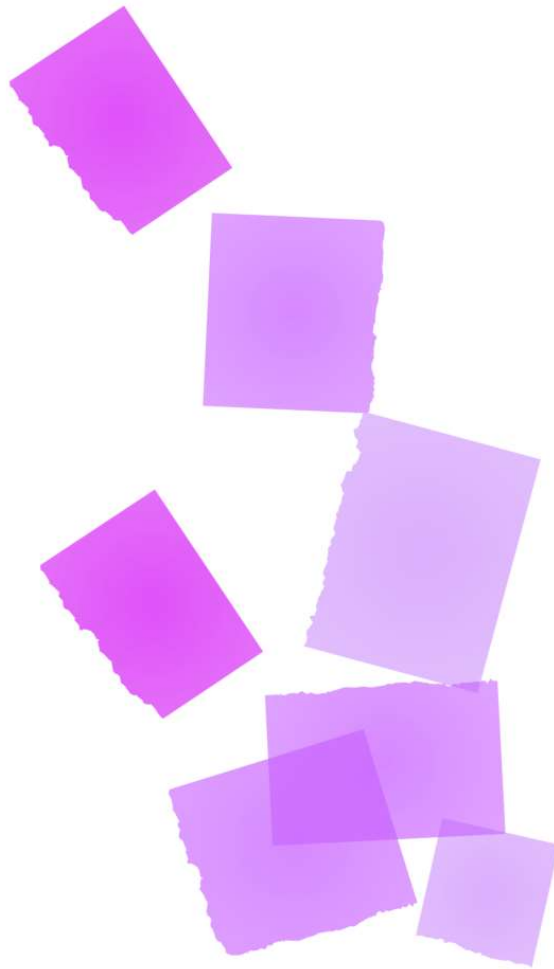
"And now, Margaret," said her husband, as she sat holding her son's hand, and listening to every word that fell from his lips, "would you have had him remain at home in idleness and lose the honors he has won in this his early youth?"

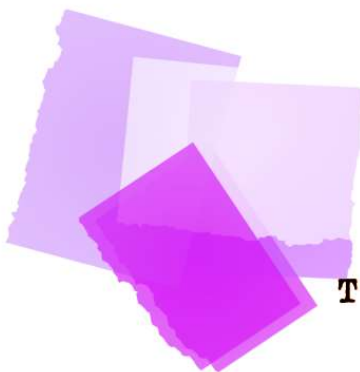
The tears sprung in her eyes, and throwing herself on Arthur's breast she pressed him closer to her heart.

"I had forgotten my sufferings, my boy," cried she, "in the delight of seeing you once more at my side. But I am proud, too, of your noble conduct, and as thankful for the freedom of our country as many who parted from their sons with tearless eyes. I will not be called the less patriotic because I let you go with a breaking heart."

"Add to that, dear madam," interrupted Wilson, laying his hand upon Major Lindsay's arm, and gazing at him with respect and admiration, "add to that the right you had to those bitter tears, when, after your heavy and successive

afflictions, you still had the courage to give up this last and only child, whom God in his goodness has saved, that he may live to tell the story of his parent's patriotism and their self-devotion. The struggle is over, the victory is won; our native land is free, and her oppressors gone. Thousands are still to see the light, whose hearts will beat as bravely as Arthur's now does; but as long as our republic lasts, as long as her freedom lives, so will the names of her deliverers be remembered and venerated for the deeds of superhuman valor which shook and rent the chains we never, never will feel upon ourselves again. I have made a tiresome speech, Arthur, for I see you smile at the old man's enthusiasm, but as surely as I say it now, the deliverers of the land will live forever—the name of Washington will never die!"





THE THREE SISTERS.

BY EMILY BEAUMONT.

"JANE," said my mother, one night, as I lit my candle, before retiring, "to-morrow you must go to spend the afternoon with your Aunt Hannah."

"Dear mother," I replied, dolefully, "what crime have I committed, that I must do penance the whole evening?"

"Why your sister and I are too much engaged to visit the old lady this week, so I have sent her word that you are coming instead."

Aunt Hannah was a distant relation of my mother's, who was called aunt by the juvenile members of our family from the respect due to her advanced age; she had been very kind to me when a child, but as I grew older the weekly visit became more a dull task than a pleasure; until the duty devolved almost entirely upon my mother and my elder sister.

It had been some months since I had seen her, and the good old lady welcomed me very cordially; but after the first words of greeting and the usual inquiries about health, a solemn silence stole over us. I looked at Aunt Hannah, as she sat knitting, in her accustomed corner, in her snow-white cap and spectacles, with her snuff-box lying on a stand at her side; at two large tabby cats, that were dozing on the hearth-rug in front of the fire; at the geraniums and roses in the window, and at the various articles of furniture which the room contained; but all was in vain, and I felt very uncomfortably restless, and a wearisome inclination to yawn. At last, raising my eyes in despair, I noticed a large painting in a richly gilt frame, which I had often seen before, but never examined particularly.

"Aunt Hannah," I said, "that is a very pretty picture, what does it represent?"

My aunt glanced up at it very sorrowfully, and said, "yes, but there is a melancholy history connected with it; it is a family piece; the portrait of one of my early friends, with her children."

I approached the picture, and examined it attentively. It represented a lady with a sweet and engaging countenance, expressive of mildness and innocence, yet with a slight trace of melancholy mingled with its calm beauty. A lovely child was reposing peacefully in her arms, and two others were playing at her feet, one with large, laughing, black eyes and dark hair, and

the other with bright golden ringlets shading her blooming cheeks and dark blue eyes.

"These are beautiful children, aunt," I said, "I can hardly imagine that they were destined for any sorrow, and the mother looks too fair and fragile for the trials of this world."

"She was indeed too gentle and too good for this earth," was the answer of my aunt, "and if you would like to hear it, I will relate their story to you."

"Eliza Metford," said my aunt, "was a school-mate of mine, and her sweet and innocent face was a true type of the purity and goodness of her disposition. After we both left school, our intimacy continued, and I was often with her in the gay and fashionable circles in which her family associated. Yet amidst all she preserved her calm dignity of manner, and was reserved and timid. When still very young, her hand was sought and given to one, who was much her superior in years, but in whom talent and learning were united to a fine person and polished manners.

"For a time she lived happily. But at last she discovered that the place which in her heart was filled by his image, was in his usurped by the worldly honor which he was so eagerly seeking. She had little ambition, while it was his master passion. Her love now concentrated itself on her children, who were more idolized than loved. They were three lovely little girls, and the eldest had her mother's regular and delicate features; the second, the dark flashing eyes and noble features of her father. But all three were singularly beautiful, and warmly attached to their parents, and to each other.

"It would have been difficult to imagine a fairer and happier family than theirs, when these portraits were painted; yet even then the worm was gnawing at the heart of the rose. The bright flush upon the mother's cheek came and went too changefully for perfect health; the light within her mildly beaming eyes became brighter, but it was the feverish glow of consumption. Death had already marked her for his victim. In a few short months, she became the prey of the relentless spoiler.

"Darkness and desolation dwelt by the once happy fireside. The ringing laughter of childhood was hushed, for the shadow of the grave

brooded over their young spirits, and the solitary husband turned from the once loved tranquillity of his home, to a more reckless pursuit of his idol, fame.

"Meantime his fair young daughters, Ellen, Virginia, and Eliza, lived in the solitude of their home and passed from children into lovely girls. The years that wrote their traces in deep furrows upon the lofty brow of their father, and in grey hairs among his once dark locks, only added new beauty and bloom to the graceful girls, that grew like fresh flowers in loneliness and seclusion. But at last the scene was changed, for the father led another bride to his stately mansion, less fair and gentle than their own kind mother, but still beautiful and young. Again the apartments rang with the sound of revelry and rejoicing, and the doors were opened for the reception of visitors.

"But his daughters found no kindred heart to rest upon, no gentle counsellor in the lady who seemed devoted to pleasure, and whose happiness consisted only in the bustle and amusements of this world. In a short time they yielded to the irresistible impulse, and were drawn into the whirlpool of vanity, becoming as gay and careless, as the rest of the giddy throng. But this was only in outward appearance; the remembrances of childhood, the prayers offered at the mother's knee, the hymn with which she lulled them to their nightly rest, the kind words of maternal admiration were not so easily forgotten, and these memories often pressed upon the heart when the laugh and song was upon the lip.

"Many admirers thronged around the fair sisters; the wealthy and the proud sued for their notice, and genius and learning laid their laurels at their feet; but the elder sister loved one whose only wealth was an irreproachable name and a brave and fearless heart. He was a young officer in the navy, of respectable connections, but not in affluent circumstances, and her father refused to give his consent to their union. With the hope that time would overcome all obstacles, they were privately married, and the lover set off on another voyage, while the lady remained at home. Some time passed, when it was announced that the ship in which he sailed was wrecked, and he, with the greater part of the crew buried in a watery grave. His bride was seated with the rest of her family when this intelligence reached her. It was a cold, stormy winter evening, and from the comfort and luxury of her own fireside, her thoughts turned anxiously to him whom she feared was exposed to the rage of the billows. The rest of the family were engaged with their usual occupation, when their father, who had been perusing the evening paper, casually mentioned the loss of the ship; the

sound fell like the knell of death upon the heart of the unhappy daughter; she arose and stood before him, her face pale, but fearfully calm. 'Is it indeed true?' she asked. 'I fear it is,' was his reply. She turned away and attempted to pass out of the apartment, but fell senseless upon the floor.

"Assistance was immediately procured, and she was conveyed to her chamber. She awoke only too soon to the consciousness of her misery. She raved wildly, at first of his death and of her love and despair, but after a few days she became composed, and appeared to be partially recovered. For a short while she moved about the house with the noiseless tread and bloodless cheek of a spectre. No smile was ever seen upon her pallid lips. She gradually wasted away, and in a short time was consigned to the tomb. To the miser-death is a welcome rest.

"Again was the mansion lonely and deserted. The premature death of her sister was deeply felt by Virginia. They had scarcely ever been separated, they had always loved one another dearly, and it seemed as if she could not be comforted. Each familiar scene was full of memories of the loved and lost. The books they had read; the embroidery they had worked; the songs they had sung; the walks where they had rambled; the places where they had sat together, conversing gaily on a thousand happy themes, or building bright castles in the fairy realms of thought, all these re-called her image to the mind of her sorrowing sister, till time, who is the most potent physician for such griefs, softened her regret, and mingled a melancholy pleasure with the tenderness with which she still continued to regard her.

"It was a long time, however, before she consented again to mingle in company, and when she at last suffered herself to appear in public, her dejected countenance and dark mourning dress attracted universal sympathy. Some time after this she became acquainted with a young gentleman who sought her hand, and she finally consented to become his wife. Their marriage was celebrated with great pomp and ceremony. Her husband was handsome, wealthy, and a general favorite with the gay and distinguished circles in which he mingled; and a long vista of happiness seemed opening before the young couple. But the one who is all gallantry and devotion in the ball-room may be a very unfit companion for the fireside; and Virginia, who possessed all her father's warmth of passion, mingled with his high and haughty temper, was not long in discovering that her husband was more fond of the gaming-table than of the pleasures of her society. In a short time his affections seemed entirely alienated from her, and

anger and unkindness were succeeded by coldness and indifference. He became more and more dissipated, and in less than two years from her marriage she returned to her father's house, while he left the city and was not heard of for some time. At length a letter was received, stating that he was very ill, and that it was feared he would not recover; but he wished to see his wife and entreat her pardon before he died. She instantly complied with his request, but when she arrived at the end of her journey she found that she had come too late: he had died and was buried.

"The grief of his unhappy wife may be more easily imagined than described. She had loved him sincerely in spite of his unkind conduct; and his untimely death fell with a shock of intense anguish upon her already agonized heart. She returned in deep affliction, and her violent sorrow became a settled melancholy, from which it seemed impossible to arouse her. In a short time her friends perceived symptoms of mental aberration, which continued to increase till her fine mind appeared totally destroyed. By degrees she became calmer, as her derangement assumed a milder form: her wandering intellect seemed to remember and to live over scenes that were long ago past. It was sad to look upon her, as she would appear to receive visitors and entertain them very often, conversing with persons

that had been dead many years, sometimes singing or playing on the piano for their amusement.

"It is sad to think of the wreck of worlds, to look upon the ruined temples and palaces of ancient days, but it is terrible to view the wreck of a noble mind, to see the eyes that once were bright with intelligence and animation gleam with the wild fires of insanity. It was well for the unfortunate Virginia when death released her from every pang. She died calmly, after a slight illness of a few days."

"But what became of the youngest sister?" I inquired.

"Poor thing," was the rejoinder, "she went into a lingering consumption, and died when very young. Her spirits and health were both affected by the misfortunes of her family. After her father's death his effects were sold, and this picture was purchased and presented to me by a friend who knew how highly I would estimate such a relic of happier days: but when I gaze on the fair angelic countenances of the mother and her sweet children, and think of the mournful fate that was reserved for them, I could weep if I did not know that they had long since seen the benefit of these mysterious dispensations of Divine Providence; for they are where tears are wiped from every eye, and sorrow and sighing have fled away."





FEBRUARY, 1851.

SUNSET.

BY MRS. S. J. MCGARRAH.

How beautiful is a brilliant sunset, yet how varied are the feelings it produces on the human breast.

A fair and lovely girl is gazing on the glistening clouds that form the sun's bright night robes, she smiles upon their beauty, for her heart is glad with joyous anticipations; ere another sunset casts its golden light around her youthful form, she will be the happy bride of one whom she loves with all a woman's tenderness, one in every way worthy of possessing her pure and trusting heart. How natural then for her to smile as she beholds that gorgeous sunset, for she hails it as a harbinger of bright and happy days to come.

But see! another bride elect is gazing too upon the western sky, though lovely as the bright beam that illumines her lofty brow. The wondrous beauty of that face is clouded by an expression of sadness and anxiety, for the morrow bringeth not to her the realization of love's extatic dreams, but it will sorrowfully witness the entrusting of her happiness to one whom she finds it impossible to love. He is the possessor of unbounded wealth, and ambition leads her on to future misery; though powerless to resist, she is fearfully awake to all she sacrifices in giving up the holy feelings of unselfish love, that cause the humblest hearth-stone to shine with the beaming light of happiness, for the glittering baubles that lendeth not their beauty to the heart, but only make its desolation more apparent. Sadly she gazes on the departing sun, and tears sparkle in her eyes as she thinks when next she beholds it thus, she will be fettered by chains which though glittering, will fester her heart with their galling pressure.

Come hither and gaze through the shining windows into that comfortable parlor, it is adorned with elegance and simplicity. There are no gewgaws that make little children tremble for fear

they should injure them, but every article of furniture is suggestive of pleasure and convenience. The grandmother one of those beautiful pictures of old age, that fling around an atmosphere of gladness, is seated in a comfortable arm-chair smiling upon the little ones sporting around her; their mother is engaged in some light needle-work, while her oldest daughter is dressing a doll for little Molly, the youngest pet, a bright-eyed little elf, upon whose curly head but three summers have yet shone; she has decorated her kitten with a piece of red calico, and is playing "mamma" with inimitable grace; Sallie and Kate are waltzing around grandmama's chair, and George and Roland are completing a mimic vessel. All that happy family seem bound together by the bright and enduring chain of household love. Softly the shadows deepen upon that group as the last sunbeam steals from the room. Just then the door opens, and a noble-looking man in the prime of life is among them; he greets his wife with the same fondness as in the early days of their wedded life, and smiling joyously on each member of that united band, he takes little Molly on his knee, and kisses her with all a father's fondness for "the baby." Though the sun has set, and the shades of night have fallen around, the room is bright with the sunshine of happiness and love.

Alas! alas! that every bright picture of happiness should have its sad reverse. Within an upper room in a dilapidated dwelling in the outskirts of the city, a pale and fragile-looking woman is weeping over her only child, a beautiful boy six years of age, who is gazing into her face with eyes whose startling brightness denote the fever revelling in his veins. Slowly the vision of her early days comes up before her; an orphan in her youth, her life was checkered; then came the bright era of her wedded life; then the joyous hours of maternal love; then the scene darkened



to the gloom of blackest night; the angel of death had rent from her heart the dearest tie that bound it. Days, months, and years of sorrow followed, yet the glad music of her child's voice would oft-times bring a smile to her wan face, but now the bitterest hour has come, the last link in the chain of love is about to be snapt, and tears of agony are wrung from that woman's heart as she thinks of her desolation. Slowly the boy's brow pales, his eyes become dull and glassy, yet he faintly smiles as he murmurs words of comfort to his mother. The last beams of the setting sun are resting on that youthful face, making it bright as what we dream of angels. Now it has passed away, and with it the last sigh of that cherub child! Darkness has stolen around, darkness deep and dense, yet one gleam is left to strengthen the widow's heart, a gleam that has gladdened many a darkened heart when all other light had passed away, that gleam is "trust in God." And when the sun of her earthly joys had departed, the moonbeams of God's love illumined her heart.

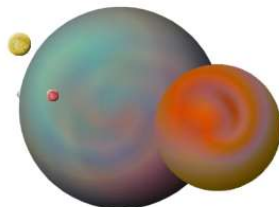
A gallant vessel is returning from a long and dangerous voyage; swiftly she nears the destined haven; the decks are crowded with passengers from almost every clime. There the grey-haired man is trembling with the joyful anticipation of seeing once again the children from whom he has been so long parted; there wives are looking forward to glad re-union with their husbands, and little children smile to see their mother's brows so bright; all, all are eager to tread again the fragrant earth! Though some feel the sad loneliness of strangers in a strange land, with none to welcome them, yet that sweet consoler hope, brings bright visions of the future to their thoughts, and every heart is filled with momentary joy, as amid the shouts of the sailors, and with the beams of the setting sun glittering upon its sails, the vessel touches the wished-for land! And as the sun smiles a welcome ere it sinks to rest, the evening air is rent with a soul-stirring shout of gladness that dwelleth long in the hearts of the listeners: though a mantle of darkness is cast upon the earth, the dreams of the wanderers are bright with welcome smiles and loving tones.

A sturdy group of workmen are returning from

their daily labors, the cheerful smile of honest industry dwelleth on each sun-burnt face, and their thoughts are pleasant as they near their humble, but peaceful homes. Little children will cluster around them as they enter, and baby will spring from its mother's arms, and place its velvet cheek against the rougher one of its father; his tidy wife is engaged in preparing the evening meal, stopping to tell some little news, or relating the "funny sayings" of the little ones. When scenes like this greet him, how bright must be the setting sun to the weary laborer, for it bringeth him rest, and comfort, loving smiles, and joyous tones.

In a gloomy cell, within the walls of a prison, a man in the prime of life is sighing over the mis-spent years of a life of crime. Reared in the lap of luxury, fortune cast over his youthful years her brightest and most beautiful tints, but reverse came, and the demon of discontent wrought his ruin. The purity of his childhood passed away like a dream in the night, and step by step he sunk to the lowest depths of crime. The stern appeal of his father commanded him to stop in his downward course, yet he heeded it not; the more touching and tender music of his mother's voice fell upon his marble heart like drops of water, drying up and leaving there no trace. All, all the tears he has wrung from the hearts of those who loved him he now beholds like a flood of liquid fire before him; the past is rife with bitterness, the future to his despairing soul holds forth no light. To-morrow he will stand upon the scaffold to expiate his crimes, and as the last ray of the setting sun passes from his cell, he groans in agony at the thought that it never will set again upon his doomed life.

Many are the scenes on which the sun gazes ere it sinks to rest, but none are so thrilling as man's farewell to this world of trials—sometimes it is peaceful as the breathings of an infant—sometimes agonizing and despairing—sometimes bright as the beam that lights it. Oh! let our footsteps press the path to heaven with such unflinching firmness, that our last sunset may be glorious as the glittering crown on an angel's brow!



THE MINISTER'S DAUGHTER.

BY ELLA RODMAN.

CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 21.

THE bright sunshine came streaming in the pleasant room, the birds sang joyfully their morning hymns, and little Eve Canfield lifted her bright young head, and put up her pretty lips to meet her sister's morning kiss. But no Kate met her laughing eye; she glanced around, but the room was empty; and getting out of bed, the little one proceeded to her father's apartment. Mr. Canfield beheld a little, white-draped figure at his door, that said in pleading tones, "please, papa, take Eve in—for Sister Kate has left me all alone." He smiled as he took the little one in his arms; saying at the same time, "some freak of Kate's, I suppose—perhaps she has been seized with a mania for early rising."

But breakfast was on the table, and no Kate made her appearance. Mr. Canfield remembered her conduct of the preceding evening, and feeling quite angry at her self-willed proceedings, he directed them to search the grounds; and even went in quest of the truant himself. But she was not to be found; and when the father at length entered with the open letter in his hand, and the announcement that she had left them, the pale, trembling step-mother burst into tears.

"Do not weep, Emily, for this head-strong girl," said Mr. Canfield, "the step is entirely of her own seeking, and may be of benefit to her—it will at least teach her that warmer or kinder hearts are not to be found in the world than those abandoned at home. Your own conscience must be entirely free from all shadow of reproach; so dry your tears, and listen to what she says."

Mr. Canfield's surprise and displeasure at the step which his daughter had taken almost obliterated all feelings of love or grief; and in a firm tone he read as follows:—"After what passed last night, father, I can no longer remain at a home where I am regarded but as a rebellious child. My pride will not stoop to make the apology you require, and although it is with feelings of grief, I have concluded to engage in new scenes and employments—I will no longer be a burden to you. I cannot let you know where I am going, but I intend to become a teacher in an institution of perfect respectability—a situation for which I am well qualified, and one which will render me at least independent. This is

no idle scheme, invented and acted upon in a moment of passion; I have long seen a gradual withdrawing of your love—you are now engrossed by new ties and claims—there *was* one bright beaming of a better state, but that is now past, and I have done wisely to withdraw from a home where my presence yields no pleasure. Cherish little Eve, dear father, and may she never feel the loneliness, the want of love which has driven her sister to this step."

Emily's tears had fallen unceasingly as Mr. Canfield read this epistle; and when it was ended she murmured sadly, "you will learn to hate me, Edward, for I am the cause of this estrangement between father and daughter."

"Say rather that her own head-strong will is the cause," replied her husband, sternly, "and do not be so ready to accuse yourself without reason, Emily. I also am to blame," he continued, "I was vainly and foolishly proud of her energy and talents, and neglected to root up the weeds of pride and self-will that have choked up every better quality of the heart. That Kate will acquit herself well in her new situation, I have not the least doubt; she is peculiarly qualified for the office of teacher, and as we both deserve punishment, I shall not interfere with her movements—trusting that when she does come back to us, which I think she one day will, it will be in a far different spirit."

People were most busily employed in forming conjectures respecting the absence of the minister's daughter from her father's house. Some said that her step-mother had turned her out of doors—others, that she had left it of her own accord in a fit of anger—and some, more charitably inclined, cried shame on mischief-making rumors, and stoutly maintained the opinion that Kate Canfield had gone to pay a visit to a distant relative. But alas! for the reputation of Glenwood, these last were but few, and were almost put down by the majority. Nothing, however, could be ascertained with certainty; for little Eve and the boys always said that their sister had gone away to school, and was coming back to them soon; and no one dared to question either the minister or his wife upon the subject; but their interest and excitement was before long directed to another channel.

Mr. Canfield, upright as he had always walked in the path of duty, noble as he had always been in his dealings with his fellow-men, satisfactorily as he had discharged the callings of his sacred office, had enemies who only waited their time to bring discord into his Eden, and drag him down from the eminence to which he had been elevated by the love and respect of all who knew him. One in particular, a wealthy, uneducated man of little principle, or good sense, animated by a restless want of occupation, and a wish to distinguish himself as a leader in putting down annoyances, was particularly active in stirring up the congregation with false rumors and distorted representations. Three important charges were brought forward against Mr. Canfield: in the first place he lived too extravagantly—ministers had no right to feed on the fat of the land—it set a bad example, and raised envious feelings in those whose means would not allow the same style; in short, it was the height of impropriety for clergymen to spend their money as they chose—even their own private property. Secondly, Mr. Holland was loud in his disapproval of the minister's second choice, he regarded his marriage with his wife's sister in the light of a crime; and in the third place, he inveighed against the honors of papacy; the bishop had made a short stay at the house of Mr. Canfield, had preached for him one Sunday, and was regarded by him with feelings of the warmest personal friendship; this intimacy did not suit him, the bishop was much disliked by the people of Glenwood, and he feared that it was calculated to make the minister arbitrary in his notions, and should be given up for the good of his parishioners.

Therefore Mr. Holland proposed that they should proceed as follows: they would require Mr. Canfield to lay aside various appearances of luxury, allowable in all but a minister, and also to give up all intimacy with the bishop, never invite him again to the pulpit, and even refrain from all mention of him in his sermons, or at other times. His improper marriage, though a subject of regret, could scarcely now be helped; therefore they must content themselves with expressing to him their disapprobation. On his refusal to comply with these terms, nothing remained for them but to signify their intention of procuring another minister. "But will that be so easy?" asked some of the prudent, "no other clergyman either would or could officiate for so small a salary as Mr. Canfield receives, and we may find that this revolt costs us more in the end than we are willing to give."

Their leader replied energetically that whether it did or not he did not care in the least; they *ought* to give more—the church was rich enough to pay for it, and for his part, he was quite ready

to give his contribution. Shame on them if they were to reward Mr. Canfield's talents and assiduity with the pittance he received; and greater shame when he complained not of this parsimony, to seek in his conduct and movements causes of offence. Shame, shame on thee, Glenwood! for even now he would but have replied,

"Father! forgive them, for they know not what they do."

A meeting was called; various wise and select conferences took place; and at last they concluded, under the generalship of Mr. Holland, to wait upon the minister and request his decision as to the acceptance of their terms. It was not that the people of Glenwood were animated by any bitter feelings toward Mr. Canfield—they merely needed excitement of some kind or other; and the eloquence of Mr. Holland succeeded in convincing them that they had hitherto yielded to imposition, and tamely suffered nuisances that had better be expelled.

Bracing themselves up, therefore, with a consciousness of their injuries, a select deputation presented themselves before the astonished minister, and proceeded to unfold their causes of complaint. The usually mild temper of Mr. Canfield was roused almost to anger by this unjust and irritating tyranny, and in a calm tone he told them that he would submit to no such restrictions; that this prying into his conduct was unworthy both of them to do, and of him to submit to, and that if they had grown weary or displeased with his services they must seek another minister. Somewhat confounded by the manner in which their disclosures had been met, and a little brought down by his first mentioning the probability of his departure, the worthies departed without proceeding to any further measures.

The minister spent that evening in his study, and when he joined them at the tea-table, Emily noticed that his cheek was pale, and his eye looked dim as with tears; but she remarked it not, except perchance that her voice took a yet softer tone in speaking to him. They did not exactly tell him to go, but Mr. Canfield observed among his congregation marks of dissatisfaction that pained him exceedingly; there were now often vacant seats in the church, and constrained greetings from those who had always approached him with expressions of the warmest love. He could not avoid dwelling on his kindness and forbearance toward those who were thus bitter against him, and their proceedings appeared to him in the light of a persecution; it preyed upon his spirits—and the wife at length hung hopelessly, almost despairingly over the couch on which he lay in all the insensibility of fever and delirium.

Kate Canfield found herself on that bright,

sunshiny morning, an alien from her father's house, travelling on desolate and alone, to the female academy, whose advertisement for an assistant teacher she had thus determined to answer in person. The rapid motion of the cars, the sunshine and joy without, and a certain sensation of independence, imparted a feeling of energy, and even curiosity respecting her adventures. She wondered what fate had in store for her; whether the tangled thread would ever be unraveled; and after a fatiguing journey of several hours she found herself at the place of her destination. Her heart failed her a little as she beheld the imposing front of the edifice; but boldly mounting the flight of steps, she rang the bell with a firm hand, and requested an interview with the principal.

A very pompous lady, considerably troubled what to do with all the dignity consequent upon the imposing aspect, and flourishing condition of the institution, the unheard of and astounding advancement of the pupils, and above all her own importance as principal, now made her appearance, and regarded Kate with the penetrating look of examination assumed by those who are quite bursting with the consciousness of their own elevated position. Kate, by no means abashed into utter insignificance as the good lady evidently expected, lifted her saucy eyes and returned the stare with perfect composure, as she proceeded to explain the purpose of her visit. Mrs. Crawford was very much surprised, rather pleased with the appearance of the candidate, and after a hasty examination, went to hold a short consultation with her husband, whose advice by the way, she never considered worth taking.

"Your references, miss?" inquired the lady, with a business-like air, as she re-entered the apartment.

"I have no reference," said Kate, proudly, "I am the daughter of the Reverend Mr. Canfield."

"The Rev. Mr. Canfield, of Glenwood?" inquired the preceptress, in surprise. Kate bowed assent.

Mrs. Crawford was astonished. She had heard of Mr. Canfield—he was known as "the rich minister," and her looks expressed the wonder she felt that a daughter of his should answer an advertisement for a school-teacher. But Kate deigned no explanation; she merely said that it was her wish to be engaged in the institution; and after some little deliberation, Mrs. Crawford expressed herself satisfied with her qualifications, and named the salary, which to Kate seemed almost princely when associated with the idea of earning it herself. She entered upon her new duties with a degree of cheerful zeal; and though at first almost dismayed by the sea of strange faces which burst upon her as she entered the

school-room, she soon grew accustomed to her situation, and acquitted herself to the entire satisfaction of her employers. The appearance of the new teacher called forth expressions of the warmest admiration; she looked so young and beautiful that all were irresistibly attracted toward her.

Kate soon found a difference, however, between one's own luxuries at home, and the comforts of a boarding-school; her little room in the attic was as different as possible from the well-remembered apartment where she had collected all that was pleasing to the eye till it almost resembled a fairy bower; and then every morning, long before daylight, she was awakened by the most dismal sounds sent forth by the suffering piano under the hands of juvenile performers, who, scarcely awake themselves, repeated over and over the monotonous pieces in the exercise-book, until Kate's ears fairly ached; and she would just succeed in falling into a dose, when the great brass bell sent forth sounds loud enough to wake the seven sleepers. All were expected to fly from their beds at this dread summons; and feeling very much like a fretful child, the young teacher would make her hasty toilet, and descend to morning prayers. The plain, boarding-school fare often remained untasted on her plate, as she thought with a sigh of the comforts of home.

Mrs. Crawford was delighted with her new assistant, and no less so with her own penetration in having engaged her. So talented and untiring in her efforts, and yet so perfectly lady-like and high-bred in manners, she was a real prize to the institution; and the polite principal took care to display her on every occasion when anxious parents came to inquire after the progress and welfare of their children. "Miss Canfield, daughter of the Rev. Mr. Canfield," made quite a show in introducing her; and the institution received several new pupils from the mere circumstance of the daughter of a wealthy minister being one of the teachers. The little ones too were always hanging about her, attracted, as children invariably are, by her pretty face and gentle manners, they rivaled each other in attachment to their "beautiful Miss Canfield." Busy little hands daily twisted those shining locks into their own natural curls, as they begged her so hard to let them hang about her neck, and not tuck them up with that hateful comb. Kate allowed them to do as they pleased, but she still bore in mind who had made a similar request, and resolutely braided them back to the great grief of the little hair-dressers.

Often in the course of her instructions, as she pointed out and explained familiar passages, the tears would start to her eyes, and a choking sensation come in her throat, as she thought of the

study where she had passed so many happy hours—of the kind parent who had watched over and assisted her—of the library window and those well-remembered sunsets when she sat poring over her beloved authors—of the little dimpled Eve, and her two young brothers—and sometimes the gentle figure of her step-mother would rise up reproachfully before her, and accuse her of harshness and injustice; but she put aside thoughts of contrition by saying, "if she had only remained Aunt Emily, I might have loved her."

This step, however, wild as it was, had its advantages. Kate was rapidly learning habits of self-denial, and care for others. Her new situation often called for the exercise of patience and self-examination; she was no longer the petted child with no occupation but that of self-amusement; and in the weary repetition of explanation to some dull child, she herself acquired lessons that were of value to her in after life. Her days glided on monotonously; summer deepened into autumn, and autumn into winter, and still Kate pursued her never-varying duties.

It was now a whole year since Kate Canfield entered the academy. During that time she had seen no one from home; but rumor had informed them of her destination, and they knew that she was well, and, as far as they could learn, happy. Her character had undergone a great change, and one decidedly for the better. Mrs. Crawford, pleased with the success of her instructions, and more and more convinced of her good fortune in obtaining such an assistant, had herself requested a renewal of their engagement, accompanied by an increase of salary. Kate did sometimes wonder if people always could live in such an unvarying scene; amid the daily handling of globes, and pointing out of places—the exercise of the eternal black-board, and unending history lessons—and the hourly condemnation of hearing the French and Spanish languages murdered in a perfectly unjustifiable manner.

Kate was seated in the school-room one afternoon after school hours, surrounded by a bevy of children, when her attention was drawn toward the pale, sad countenance of a little girl in deep mourning, who, having only entered the school that day, felt strange and shy, and kept aloof from the others. Kate whispered a few words to one of the children, who, in compliance with her request, approached the new-comer and endeavored to make her feel at home.

"Did you feel sorry to leave your mother?" said the child, after exchanging a few words with the stranger, "I did—very."

"I have no mother," she replied, sadly, while the tears came into her eyes.

"Nor father, either?" pursued her companion, in a tone of kindest sympathy.

"No—no one to care for me," said the poor child, as her sobs became quite audible.

"Oh, you shouldn't say that," rejoined the other, "for I will care for you, and Miss Canfield will care for you—will you not, Miss Canfield? because you would feel so bad yourself, you know, if you had no father or mother. You *have* a father and mother, have you not, Miss Canfield?"

Kate rose hastily from her seat, and rushed up stairs to prevent her feelings from venting themselves as loudly as those of the orphan child. The image of her father, pale, dying, rose up before her, and she felt as if she could have flown to him, to fall at his feet and ask forgiveness. What would be her feelings, after her treatment of him, if she were indeed an orphan?—if she had looked upon his face for the last time?—if their last parting had been in anger? She thought too of Emily; she had reflected calmly on her conduct, and conscience whispered that hers had been the fault, that she alone was to blame; and yet her pride still revolted a little at the acknowledgment—still drew back from humbling herself to ask forgiveness. But through that almost sleepless night, in the lonely, wakeful hours, the stern, rebuking spirit left her not; and she fell asleep at length with the words upon her lips,

"I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, father, I have sinned before heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy daughter."

"A letter for you, Miss Canfield!" called out one of the little girls next morning, "a letter with the Glenwood post-mark!—don't you feel very glad?"

Kate hastily seized the letter, and tore it open with a trembling hand. It was from Emily, and her heart beat wildly as she read its contents, "your father, dear Kate, lies stretched upon a bed of sickness, from which it is doubtful if he will ever rise; he is almost constantly delirious, and often speaks of you—but although he did not tell me to send for you, I knew that you would wish to see him. Come instantly, dear Kate, or he may not——"

Here the paper was so blotted with tears that the writing was no longer legible. "Dear, kind mother!" Kate involuntarily exclaimed, "how I have wronged you!"

Mrs. Crawford was overwhelmed at the prospect of losing her favorite teacher, the children were quite frantic at the idea of parting with their "dear, beautiful Miss Canfield," but Kate was firm in her intention of starting immediately for home; and with kind adieus to all, she set forth as speedily as possible. Trembling, almost afraid to proceed as she found herself once more near home, the truant went forward with faltering steps, afraid to question any, lest the words

that her father no longer lived, might fall upon her ear.

She passed on, and stood within the chamber of the sick man. The room was shrouded in almost total darkness, the heavy curtains fell as a thick bar before the radiant sunshine, and at first she could scarcely distinguish any object. But the sight of a kneeling figure caught her eye, and gliding gently forward, she sunk down beside her, as she sobbed forth, "Aunt Emily!—mother!—will you forgive me? It is I—the poor, outcast Kate!"

Such a kiss as an angel might have given was pressed softly on her brow; and the step-mother gently whispered, "I have long forgiven you, dear girl, and most gladly do I welcome you back to your early home—your father, they say, will live."

Kate sprang impulsively forward, and just then her father opened his eyes. "Kate," said he, faintly, "where is she?"

"I am here, dear father!" she replied, in a voice scarcely audible.

"Here?" he repeated, "but Kate left me, went away—did she not?"

Kate sank down by the bedside, and covered his hand with kisses, "oh, father! I am really your own, *own* Kate—will you not forgive me?"

He drew her toward him, examined every feature, and then kissing her fondly, appeared quite satisfied that his daughter had returned. The physician now came forward and recommending perfect quiet, Emily led the repentant girl from the room, and the two were closeted a long time together, during which Kate appeared quite overcome with a consciousness of her misconduct, and reiterated her petitions for forgiveness. The step-mother saw with pleasure that a change had taken place, and having again assured her of her perfect willingness to forgive, she told her of all the difficulties and troubles which had preyed upon her father, and brought on the obstinate fever that endangered his life.

"Is it *my* father," exclaimed Kate, with flashing eye, "my noble, gifted father whom they dare to abuse? I will go to them instantly!" she exclaimed, "I will tell them——"

"Softly, Kate," interrupted her mother, as she took the arm of the excited girl. "Do nothing at present, my dear girl, because it will do no manner of good. Wait for things to take their own course; and in the meantime you had better walk in the grounds—you look heated."

Kate entered the garden which she had not seen for more than a year; but as she paced up and down the walks her energetic mind formed a plan which she determined to put in execution. Her indignation against her father's slanderers knew no bounds; she intended to assemble them

together, and bravely confronting them, demand an explanation of their conduct and motives. It was a project quite worthy of her; and going softly to the library, she found pens and paper, and immediately despatched her notes without informing any one of her intention.

A summons soon came from her father's apartment; she hastened eagerly to meet him, and was again folded to his bosom in all the joy of perfect recognition. "You have caused me both grief and anxiety, Kate," whispered Mr. Canfield, "but with heartfelt joy the father welcomes back his long-lost child."

With sorrow and self-reproach, Kate marked the ravages which sickness and trouble had made in the noble countenance; and like the "Peri at the gate of Paradise," she felt that her ransom was not yet—she could not enter in and taste the joys of that blissful state without some gift to atone for her error. She slid gently from the kind embrace, and taking her station in the library, awaited the entrance of her expected visitors.

The leading men in the congregation at Glenwood were somewhat surprised at receiving a summons to the minister's house; they knew of his dangerous illness, and thought on their proceedings with feelings very nearly allied to remorse, as they feared that it might be a call to the death-bed of Mr. Canfield. Mr. Holland was then absent from the village, attending to the affairs of some other parish, and without his eloquence to keep up a consciousness of their injuries, they proceeded toward the parsonage, feeling somewhat like abashed culprits.

As for Kate, she did not allow herself time to consider whether the step she had taken was strange or not; she had projected it, commenced it, and was now resolved to carry it through; therefore it was with a composed manner that she rose and received the astonished conclave. Considerably at a loss what to make of the audience thus requested by the minister's beautiful daughter, they mechanically took the seats she pointed out, and sat waiting for the issue of this novel proceeding. Kate modestly, but firmly stated the slanders which had been circulated against her father, the tyranny they sought to exercise over his conduct and movements, and then described, in a touching manner the situation to which their ingratitude and persecution had reduced him.

"With respect to extravagance, gentlemen," she concluded, in a faltering voice, "not one dollar of the small salary received has ever been expended by my father on himself or his family—the whole sum has gone to relieve the wants of others; and even those who complain of his living in a manner suitable to an educated mind

and refined habits, can bring up no one instance in which the poor and needy ever left his door unrelieved. His marriage," she continued, with a trembling voice, "is doubtless sanctioned in the sight of heaven, since those who considered it in a no less unfavorable light than yourselves have been brought to see the error of their thoughts, and even to regard it as a blessing and a grace. Of the charge of too great intimacy with the bishop I will not even speak; it is so utterly unworthy men who, like you, have known him long and well to censure the common attentions of one minister to another, that I can scarcely credit it. Before I conclude, however, allow me to undeceive you with respect to any erroneous supposition you may have formed with respect to the object of this defence. The summons you received came entirely from myself; my father does not even know of your being in the house, and I sent for you, not to entreat you still to tolerate a minister who has been thus abused, but to clear my father's character from the slanders that have been heaped upon it. As soon as he is able to rise from his sick-bed, he will endeavor to banish in another home the remembrance of those who thus reward his labors; but still, he would wish to go with an acknowledgment of their fault from those who have been instrumental in sending him from the place."

With a heightened color the young girl sank back exhausted into her seat; and her audience, astonished at the sight of so much beauty, firmness, and eloquence combined, remained for a moment spell-bound under the effect of her words. But after a short whispered consultation, one of them respectfully addressed her, "we acknowledge, Miss Canfield," said he, "that our conduct has in many respects been harsh and unjustifiable. We still regard your father with feelings of love and respect; but false rumors and representations have been hinted about, to which we are conscious

of having lent too willing an ear. We are now quite ready to retract all that has been said; we have experienced some idea of the loss that would have been ours had Mr. Canfield sunk under the illness which attacked him, and only wait his perfect restoration to health to request that he will still remain with us; and forget, if possible, the painful past."

When Kate found herself alone, she relieved her overburdened feelings with a copious shower of tears; she had in some measure retrieved her own error by restoring her father to the hearts of his people, and she wept in silent thankfulness.

When Mr. Canfield did at length recover, he listened to the humble acknowledgments and entreaties of his hitherto estranged friends; but when he heard that he owed this to his daughter, his feelings were almost too deep for utterance.

Several years after, there were the signs of mirth and rejoicing about the handsome parsonage.

It was now again summer, and the soft south breeze kissed the cheek of youth and beauty, as the bright assemblage were grouped about the spacious rooms. Kate Canfield stood in bridal white, with the rose deepening to crimson on her cheek, and her beautiful eyes turning in confusion from the gaze of those around. The step-mother bent upon her a glance of pride and love, the little Eve, now a tall, lovely girl, stood beside her as bridesmaid, and the eyes of the chosen one rested fondly upon her.

"This is the second time of your running away from me, Kate," whispered her father, "but with altogether different feelings. I even suspect that you are now a little sorry."

"Yes," she softly replied, "it was then in the storm, but now in the bright, unclouded sunshine. The conflict is past—and peace, beautiful peace! has at length descended upon my heart."

THE SILENT HEART.

BY J. K. HOLMES.

THERE seems within thine eyes, to dwell
A light, perhaps beloved too well—
A strange, a quick, a wondrous glow
As bright as sunlight on the snow.
Thy look through silence still reveals
A throbbing heart that loves, that feels,
That sleepless sense that charm'd surveys
The pure that meets its smiling gaze,
What spirit dwells in orbs like thine,
That sways, unknown, such souls as mine

With love, if hidden, yet not less
Than friends through bolder speech expressed?
Mine tranquil lives and lurks within,
It's true, yet strives not long to win,
It's firm, not born within a day,
It lives when other loves decay.
Sport on! how flatt'ry waits on thee,
With empty thoughts and melody,
But mine within my breast must lie,
Yea, spring unseen, neglected die!

THE MORNING CLOUD.

BY M. A. WHEELER.

THERE WAS a general smile all over the village, and a general lifting of eyebrows with surprise, when the invitations to little Lina Brown's wedding were sent out.

"Lina going to be married!" people exclaimed, "it surely must be a joke; why, she only let the tucks out of her dresses in the spring—what a queer wedding!" Some shook their heads gravely, saying, "she is but a child, her mind not matured, nor her habits formed. How can she realize the responsibility of her station, or understand the duties that belonged to it? Strange Mrs. Brown would allow it—but then the Staleys were rich."

On the day of the wedding, the clouds lowered ominously all the afternoon; and about twilight the snow began to fall, for it was late in December. Nobody cared for that, it is as natural to have snow in December as sunshine in June—so as the evening advanced, lanterns innumerable were seen moving along the street, each one revealing in its circle of light a pair of little feet, and a pair of polished boots, moving with noiseless tread toward the dwelling of Mrs. Brown.

Exposure to the cool winter air had brought color to every cheek, and the melting snow-flakes adorned all tresses with pearls:—it was said by a stranger who happened to be present, "all your ladies are belles." They were all *belles*, from the merry peals of laughter that rung out ever and anon on the still air. Suddenly all were silent—there was a tremendous stamping on the little porch, a measured tread in the hall, and the Rev. Amos Clark entered, bowing with much dignity, first on this side then on that.

Then there were other footsteps in the passage, light and heavy ones, a moment of suspense, and Marion Staley entered with his girlish bride. It was a strange, beautiful sight. There they stood in their early youth, and before God and man, solemnly pledged themselves to be true to each other "through life, its sunshine and its gloom." Marion's face wore an expression of perfect happiness. Lina's was absolutely radiant with joy; and when she placed her snowy hand in his, it was with all a woman's devotion and a woman's trust.

There were a few moments of restraint after the ceremony was over. The congratulations were formal to the last degree, until it came to the turn of Mary Linnaus, one of Lina's schoolmates.

"I feel real spiteful at you, Lina Brown," she said, rising up, "for getting married," she whispered, as she bent to kiss her cheek, "and I wish you may have plenty of old stockings to darn, while we are romping in the snow this winter."

"And have in the meantime somebody to crack nuts for me," laughingly replied the bride, "instead of bruising my own fingers."

And now the company began to grow more at ease. Some plays were introduced by the younger members.

"What shall we have next?" said Ellen Miller, "here, hold fast all I give you," and she drew the tips of her eight rosy fingers through Lina's open hand.

"No, no, let's 'stir the mush,' that comes next, don't it, Lina?" said another. The sound of merry voices was like the twittering of birds. The school girls all flocked around their lost mate, while the older portion of the company was divided in groups discussing authors or politics, but generally the topic was Cupid, heart and dart.

"It is such a pity you are married, Lina," said Fanny Lee. "We had planned so much fun for the long winter nights."

"It is all the fault of that young gentleman," said Lina, pointing to Marion.

"Aye," said he, significantly, "to be sure it is: but then marriage and death are not quite the same, Fanny, though you seem to make no distinction. I'm sure we can spend the long winter evenings together just as well as we did last winter."

"I'll tell you, girls, how she will visit us," said Fanny, "imagine we are all around the fire eating apples, when a modest rap at the door startles us; some one opens it, and there stands a nice little body in the back part of a big sun-bonnet, and the corners of a clean check apron flapping in the wind. 'Good evening, Mrs. Staley—how are you?' says mother, 'right smart, thank ye, how is yourself?' Mrs. Staley takes a seat, and we get a glimpse of the ends of four bright knitting-needles, peeping out of her pocket. Then commences a conversation on spinning, flax coloring, yarn, and making mince-pies, interspersed here and there with what papa and Mr. Staley like and dislike. All this time we sit staring into the fire like so many statues."

"Thinking," interposed Lina, "one thought—

'wish it was I'—now, girls, that is like Fanny's 'visit to the moon' last term. Soon as Marion and I go to housekeeping, I will have you, every one, to take tea with me."

"Us, if you please, with me," said a dozen voices, "what fine times we shall have!"

"Yes, delightful," said Lina, laughing, "I suppose we shall have acorn cups and saucers and turnip-shell bureaus. We have any quantity of broken wine-glasses and china tea-cups."

"Help! help!" cried Marion, rising to his feet, "will nobody come to my relief—aye, that's right, Manning—my head is spinning round like a top—these girls have nearly talked me to death." The ring of merry creatures, at these words, closed around him more compactly than before.

"How in all the world," cried Manning, "is a fellow to get to you?—why here is a perfect hedge of rose-bushes." No sooner had he said it, than half a dozen pins, as if to show its truth, pierced his hand as it rested on the back of a chair.

"It was always so," said Manning, "the heart that is soonest awake to the flowers, is always the first to be touched by the thorns."

Thus the evening wore away, amidst gaiety and mirth. Care, nor sorrow, nor shadow of evil to come, came over the spirits of that joyous company. Oh, could the veil of the future have been withdrawn, how would some of that happy group have shrunk from their "woman's lot." Little fairy Fanny Lee would have seen the snow-flakes of the next December weaving wreaths for her tomb-stone. Bright Ellen Miller would have beheld a weary, broken-hearted being, mourning over her heart-broken idols. And Mary Linus, the most gifted of all, would have looked on a shrieking maniac, lifting her hand against her own mother.

It was a stormy evening in December, exactly two years after the marriage of Marion Staley and Lina Brown. Until now their home had been one of peace and joy; but the roseate blush of their bright morning was darkened with the shadow of death.

Stretched on a bed in the pretty chamber, lay the emaciated form of Marion Staley. His brow was damp and cold, and the breath came through his parted lips heavily. Anguish unutterable was stamped on every feature—so terrible was the sight that many turned away unable to endure it. His wife stood beside him in mute despair, moving her white lips in the vain effort to speak. At last she gave vent to the pent-up agony of her heart in a loud, piercing shriek,

"Oh, Marion, Marion, you must not die! Marion!" she cried, yet louder, raising his head with her hand, "look at me, speak to me!"

A groan was her only answer; sight and speech were both gone.

"Lina, child, you disturb him—you had better go to your room," whispered old Mrs. Staley, laying her hand on her arm. She obeyed mechanically, and there, with her head buried in her mother's bosom, she wept a few hot tears.

It was not long before the members of her husband's family came in one by one. His mother walked the floor, wringing her hands, and crying, "my son! my son!"

Lina raised her head, "oh, is he gone—gone?" she cried, and she sunk again, with a mournful wail, into her mother's close embrace. Poor Lina!

"My dear," said Mrs. Moreton, to his weeping wife, a sister of the deceased, "hadn't you better go home and try to take some rest?" She placed her hand on his arm in silence, and arose to depart. The other sister followed her example, then the brothers—last of all his mother and father left the house. All went to their stately houses, to lay their tearful cheeks on downy pillows; but Lina pillowed her stricken head on the breast of her faithful mother. She had married into an aristocratic family, that, not even in their grief, forgot her humble origin. All that long night Mrs. Brown watched by her wretched child, chafing her cold, cramped hands, and wiping away the great drops of sweat that gathered on her face.

Lina lay still and pale as the corpse of her husband, except once when her whole frame shook convulsively—it was when she heard the sharp tearing of the shroud in the room below. Near daybreak she fell into a gentle slumber, and the watcher knelt and gave thanks to God for this little respite from sorrow.

After the funeral services Lina returned to her childhood's home—the home of which she had been the light and life. Again she entered her little room, and slept in the bed which had been hers from infancy.

Days and weeks sped away, giving to the mourner so much of relief that she could keep back the tears when in her mother's presence; but every starlight night, while that mother slept, a slight form, closely wrapped in a dark cloak, knelt on the grave of Marion Staley, and tears of bittered anguish fell thick and fast on the turf that covered his bosom.

A half-formed smile was ever playing about Lina's beautiful mouth, but it gave to her face only an expression of patient suffering, which made the heart ache to behold. Thinner and thinner grew her transparent fingers, brighter shone her large blue eyes, purer and fairer became her cheek; and Mrs. Brown's love for her fading child was perfect agony, for she saw Lina was stealing away to her rest in the grave.

Spring came and set the frozen streams at liberty, but Lina never left her home, save when

none but God, and the angels, and the stars looked down upon her. Her step was languid and slow, and often, while going up the path her own feet had worn, she pressed her pale hand tightly to her aching side. When the roses bloomed—she could go no longer; and each day her pulse beat more feebly.

It was her birth-day. Maternal love had prepared for her a delicate repast, if possible to tempt her sickly appetite. After tasting what she did not relish, she raised her eyes, beaming with gratitude, to her mother's face.

"My birth-day feast, is it not?" she said.

"Yes, my love, but you rather slight it."

"You will always remember this day, mother," said Lina, "before its light shall have quite faded away your child will be with the blessed in Para-

dise. Don't forget that, mother, when to-morrow you look down upon my still, pale face. My life is passing away so gently—poor Marion suffered terribly when he was dying. Oh, what a tall, glorious angel he must be! Mother, dear, lay me out by this window, and let the bright morning light fall full upon me. There is no evening in heaven, nor sorrow, nor death."

A few more words to her mother, a farewell to each of her weeping friends, and the gentle spirit fled from its wasted prison-house.

The sun arose in unclouded majesty, bathing in its blessed light the body of our darling, but now dead Lina.

A smile wreathed her lips, not of patience, but of joy unutterable, and on her brow, white as alabaster, sat purity and peace.



THE KING'S FAVORITE.

BY ANN S. STEPHENS.

FOR hours the poor wife of the imprisoned tradesman had remained in the position in which the overflowing of grief had left her. As if one blow had turned her to stone, she sat bending forward with clasped fingers, and eyes distendedly fixed on the door, through which her husband had been dragged. No appearance of motion bespoke life, except a slight twitching of the nerves about the mouth, as the soft troubled tones of consolation reached her ear from the lips of her daughter; who, beautiful in youth and fortitude, knelt before her with tears rolling from her dark eyes, and streaming down the sweet face that was raised imploringly to that of her mother. In vain had she exhausted every endearing epithet and term of consolation to arouse her from the lethargy of sorrow. Nothing would do. Overcome with her own sorrow and the sight of her forlorn parent, she let her young head fall into the lap of her mother, and gave vent to a burst of anguish, terrible and touching in one so apparently helpless. For some time she rested exhausted upon her immovable mother, when, suddenly springing up, her whole frame quivering with eagerness, she exclaimed, "up, dear mother, there is yet hope." Slowly the despairing eyes of her mother turned and rested their frozen beams on the glowing face of the enthusiastic girl; her marble lips parted, and her voice seemed to come from a far-off vault, "hope, hope! and who speaks of hope—thou, my fatherless one—hope?—no, the clutches of the tyrant are upon us; the shadow of death is over us; the wail of cracking heart-strings is in my ear, and talk ye of hope? There is no hope—none." Her features had remained fixed while she was speaking, and, but that the eye moved, the voice might have seemed to come from a statue, so death-like and cold it seemed.

It was the first time she had spoken—and Ruth, thinking reason was returning to its seat, answered eagerly, "do not despair, dear mother; I have a thought, if you could only compose yourself to listen. I——" but she broke off on seeing she spoke to ears that grief had made deaf to her voice. But the energy of the young girl sunk not, and she prepared to accomplish the project that had flashed across her mind in the depth of her grief, as the dazzling bow of heaven sometimes throws its belt of brilliancy over the earth,

while the rain is yet falling. Ruth wrapped herself in a large cloak, and giving directions to a boy about six years old to watch his mother, left the house. She wound through several close streets that led to a more retired part of the city, and soon, unmolested, stood on the step of what, by its closed shutters and rusty latch, appeared to be an uninhabited tradesman's stall. Her eager knock was unanswered—a second, and a third. Impatiently she raised the latch and entered what had been the ware-room of a goldsmith's stall. Cases of rings, plate, jewelry, and all the multifarious articles that compose the stock of a wealthy goldsmith of those times, lay scattered about the room without regard to order, and covered with the accumulated dust of months. The fever of excited hope ran too wildly in the mind of Ruth, to admit of more than a passing glance at the neglected wealth scattered about her. She passed quickly forward, but stopped suddenly; and her heart quailed within her, as through an open door she saw the object of her search. For the first time she thought of the magnitude and cruelty of the request she was about to make; and doubted whether, even to save the life of a father, she was doing right in tearing open the wounded bosom of one whose feelings had been so much greater than those of death. Almost breathlessly she stood by the open door, gazing upon the inmate of the little room. He was a man of about thirty years, thin and pale almost to ghastliness, yet there was something touchingly noble in his high, broad forehead, from which the black hair was combed and fell backward over his shoulders.

At length, timidly and with sinking hopes, Ruth ventured to claim his notice by advancing into the room. He raised his head, and a faint smile flitted over his features on recognizing his niece. He motioned her to take a seat on a low stool by her side, and laid his hand caressingly on her hair before he addressed her. At length, fixing his eyes mournfully upon her face, he said, in a voice so clear and sad, that it fell soothingly on the torn heart of poor Ruth, "and what brings thee, my child, to the lone home of thy uncle? Has sorrow fallen on thy young head that thou seekest companionship with misery?"

"Alas! dear uncle," she replied, "you have guessed too right; I am in sore grief; for last

night my poor father was dragged from our hearth-stone by a company of the king's men at arms, who accuse him of treason!"

"Treason! my brother John guilty of treason? child, thou ravest."

"Oh, would I did rave, dear uncle, if that could make my tale untrue—would I did rave. But alas! it is all too real. I saw it—felt it," she continued, wringing her hands and weeping bitterly; "I saw them tear him from the clinging arms of my poor mother, who now sits at home bemoaning him and bereft of reason; I saw them strike with brutal violence my dear little Richard, as he clung to the knees of his father and begged piteously that they would not drag him from us. I heard their coarse jests on my poor face as I knelt to them in my agony of grief. Uncle, I do not rave; would that I did"—and she leaned her forehead on his hand bathing it with tears.

"Compose thyself, my poor child; nay, do not cry so; this matter may not be so bad as thou supposest; knowest thou on what this charge of treason is founded?"

"Yes; when I knelt and begged of them to tell me my father's crime, they told me mockingly, uncle, mockingly, that it was for boasting that he would raise his son to the crown. I knew not what they meant then, but since I have be-thought me, that once he said in one of his merry moods, that he would make our Richard heir to the crown, meaning the sign that hangs over our ware-room. Some person must have reported this to the king, and my poor father is condemned to death by the cruel Edward, for a few words of pleasantry."

"Impossible, child, this cannot be the cause; even Edward, base as he is, would blush to put a man to death for an offence so trifling."

"Nay," she replied, "but the king has construed those words into a contempt for his title to the English crown, and, therefore, he condemns my poor father to the block."

Shore arose and traversed the room in agitation; then stopping before Ruth, he said, "taken, tried and condemned already! saidst thou this, child—and at what time must he suffer?"

Ruth clasped her hands over her eyes, as if to shut out the sad vision this question presented, and in a choked voice replied, "on Friday morning unless he can be saved."

"Saved; is there any hope of this?"

"Only through you—only through you, uncle; and it was for this I came; for this I dared to interrupt your solitude." Shore fixed his melancholy eyes upon her in inquiry, and silently waited for her to proceed.

"Yes, uncle, it is to you I come I ask my father's life, and the life of your brother. There is but one way, and would to God I could follow

it alone; but I cannot, and despair has urged me on to entreat you to join me in petitioning one for his life, who, the world says, rules this King Edward, even in his most wayward moods; I mean——"

"My wife? Ye dare not say it is my wife," almost shrieked the unfortunate man, clutching her hand, and as suddenly relinquishing it, as he fell into a chair, every limb quivering with agitation, and big drops of perspiration gathering on his pale forehead.

"Uncle, dear uncle, forgive this cruelty," cried the terrified girl, "unhappy that I am, thus to be forced to tear the heart of my kind uncle, or see my father on the scaffold." She fell upon her knees by his side while saying this, and attempted to take his hand, but he resisted her effort, saying,

"No, no, Ruth, ask me not to see her face—to hear that voice; I could not and live. What! I, the father of her child, her first, only, her lawful husband, to ask her to smile upon the man who has made my home desolate, my child worse than motherless? No, Ruth, no"—and he sprang up and struck his clenched hand upon the table—"not if it would save the life of all that ever drew blood from the same fountain."

"My dearest uncle," replied Ruth, frightened at his vehemence, "I did not ask all this; but one line, only one line from you will do more than prayers from me. I only ask you to write, uncle; surely you will do this to save your own brother and the father of your poor Ruth?"

"No more, no more; I will—but do not torture me with words."

For some time the unhappy man sat as if endeavoring to still the tumult of his frame. Then taking a vial from his pocket he drank a part of its contents, and soon became calm enough to write; but his hand seemed to shrink from the vellum; and it was long before he could bring himself to write the first line; but when this was accomplished, he proceeded rapidly, as one who fears his power to finish a task will fail. With a heavy hand he placed his signature, and handing the roll of vellum to Ruth, motioned her to depart.

Elegant and costly as the fashion of the times would permit, was the dwelling King Edward had provided for the beautiful object of his illicit love. All that wealth could purchase or power command, was lavished upon her person and decorated her habitation, but each day did she feel more sensibly the difference between the pure tenderness a husband feels for his virtuous wife, and the unholy attachment expressed by the object of her present choice. The glitter of wealth could not hide, even from the object of such a union as this, its shameless iniquity. The tie was formed by trampling on the most sacred

duties of life and upon the best feelings of the human heart. It was a bond of sin, and misery was its reward. Full and sparkling was the golden bowl the youthful monarch had offered to the lips of his beautiful victim. She drank—but bitter was the gall and wormwood she was condemned to drain alone to the bottom. Edward's attachment for her was still in its first freshness. She had not yet been called upon to witness his hand tear away the unholy links that bound them together, to spend days and nights in listening for his footsteps, to hang on his eye for a glance of former kindness, and to listen and look in vain; but her foreboding heart told her this fate would inevitably be hers; and a trembling dread of the future poisoned the present.

Whatever were the reflections of Jane they were interrupted by advancing footsteps. She listened with her graceful head bent slightly forward, and her heart palpitating like a caught bird, under her jeweled stomacher. Nearer came the light footsteps, and brilliant was the smile that flashed like morning sunlight over each beautiful feature, dimpling the cheeks and lips into almost child-like sweetness, as she advanced to the door. It opened, and admitted, not the expected royal lover, but a female, shrouded in the ample folds of a large cloak, who advanced timidly and knelt at her feet as she stood surprised and disappointed. Jane's natural benevolence prompted her to acts of kindness, and pitying the evident distress of the kneeling stranger, she stooped to raise her, exclaiming, "nay, maiden, kneel not to me; I am not one to receive the homage of my fellows. If in aught my poor efforts can assist thee, speak boldly; there is no cause of fear."

Slowly the suppliant arose; and, extending a roll of vellum, said, in a low suppressed voice, "this, lady, will inform you of my mission."

Jane took the vellum, thinking it a petition for her good offices with the king, such as she was in the habit of receiving; but before she opened it, she courteously led the stranger to one of the tapestried benches in the saloon. "Rest here, my poor maiden, while I learn the contents of this scroll, and if I can serve thee fear not the issue."

Thus saying, she withdrew to one of the arched windows and unrolled the vellum. It was scarcely open when with a smothered shriek, and lips, cheek, and brow as pale as marble, she sprang to the shrouded female and tore back the hood from a face scarcely less white than her own.

"Ruth, my own Ruth," she exclaimed, clasping the poor girl wildly to her bosom and madly kissing her forehead, "is it thou, so good and pure, who hast come to me in my degradation? But that scroll—that scroll—with its blasting

signature—whence came it, I say—speak quick or my brain will burst?" and without waiting for an answer, she darted forward to where the vellum had fallen, and again seizing it with trembling hands and compressed lips, ran over the contents. When she came to the signature, a spasm of pain seemed to dart over her, for she pressed the hand in which she grasped the vellum, heavily against her side, and stood for a few moments gasping for breath, and quivering in every joint with suppressed agony.

Ruth, almost exhausted with the contending emotions of the day, set watching with pale cheek and heavy eye, the overpowering agitation of the aunt she once thought so perfect.

Jane at length advanced to her, and laying her finger on the vellum, said, in a low, hoarse voice that, as she proceeded, rose to the pitch of agony, "this tells me there is a favor I can grant—ask it—take it, though it should be my heart-strings, and in return bear this message to him; tell him that if Jane Shore could again lay her head upon his bosom, as it once rested in her heart's innocence, she would endure the torture of years—tell him she is more wretched with a monarch at her feet, and the magnificence of a queen about her, than he can be in the solitude of his desolate home, for he has an approving conscience for a companion; but I—what have I but the consciousness of having scattered desolation and sorrow in the path of all I should have loved? Tell him I feel that misery, deep misery, will follow me for this; and now briefly tell me thine errand, for I would be alone with this scroll and my conscience."

Ruth, with many tearful interruptions, informed her of the imprisonment of her father, and the pitiful state of her other parent. Then she went on to describe her last distressing interview with her uncle. Jane listened, and as her thoughts were carried back to the scenes of her innocent happiness, by degrees the anguish of her feelings softened into a long and bitter fit of weeping. The certainty she felt of gaining a pardon for the brother of her injured husband, soothed down her tumultuous self-upbraidings; her beautiful features relaxed into their natural state, and she sat with her round white arm thrown carelessly around her niece, when quick, light footsteps were heard in the passage. The door opened, and Edward IV., of England, entered the room. A slight start, as his eyes fell on Ruth, was succeeded by a brilliant smile. He advanced, and with the graceful assurance of a man privileged to trample upon forms, separated the aunt and niece and seated himself between them.

"So, my lovely dame," said he, addressing Jane, "you have found a companion in my absence; and by my faith, a pretty one too. I, who

spurred my horse from the hunt till his sides were bloody, that I might not fail in my promised visit, feel now that I should have forced him to death, had I known I should have found you with such a companion."

As he said this, his large blue eyes were fixed in careless admiration on the blushing Ruth, while his hand was familiarly turning the rings on Jane's fingers. Jane answered with a smile, "you return from the hunt in cheerful mood, my liege, and I am right glad to see it, and more especially that the maiden pleases your majesty—for she has a boon to crave of your royal clemency."

"A boon, say you—and what favor can Edward deny a face like that? No, by the mass, if our citizens always sent such messengers, their king would soon win the title of Edward, the merciful—ay, and the beautiful, too, as our queen can witness." The little hand, still in his, was drawn suddenly away as he mentioned the queen; but he again grasped it somewhat impatiently, exclaiming with a slight laugh, "nay, Jane, no foolish jealousy—but tell us what we can do to please this fair damsel—what wouldst thou ask of us, maiden?"

"Nothing less, my liege, than the life of a father, who has fallen under your majesty's displeasure," said Ruth, kneeling before the king.

"Rise, maiden, rise—thy father shall be forgiven though treason were his crime, if it were only for his relationship to a creature so beautiful as thou art. But before we grant his pardon, take thy seat again at our side, and tell us thy father's name and offence."

"His crime," said Jane, hastily interrupting Ruth, who was about to answer, "his crime, my lord, is having said when in his wine, that he would make his son heir to the crown."

"Ha, I remember me of the circumstance; a rash fool and a vain one—still, if he is thy father, damsel, we will order his release."

Ruth, who had been indulging in hope since the entrance of the king, now sprang up as if a load had been taken from her heart. In a burst of eloquent feeling, she poured forth her gratitude to the king and then to Jane, and finished by entreating permission to depart immediately, with the joyful intelligence of her father's freedom.

"Nay, nay, my pretty one—not so fast," cried the king, "we have now a favor to crave—one kiss from those bright lips in exchange for thy father's life."

Ruth shrank from the proffered salute, and Jane seeing a cloud gathering over the king's brow, said gaily, "nay, nay, my lord, you but now accused me of jealousy—my hand claims that kiss as an atonement."

"King's lips never had fairer challenge, or more willingly paid their homage," replied the gay monarch, gallantly raising her hand to his lips, "but what is this, fair dame, that thy fingers look in so lovingly," and he took from her hand the letter of her husband, which she still unconsciously held.

"Ha, what means this?" he cried, springing up and stamping violently on the floor, "speak, madam, and disprove that Edward, of England, was to have been cheated into an act of kindness to the man he hates, as much as king can hate menial—speak, woman, I command you—explain this artifice." But the object of his wrath was incapable of answering. Exhausted by her former emotions, and terrified at his vehemence, she had fallen forward upon the floor. A string of gems that had fastened her hair under the flowing head-dress worn in that age, was torn off with the drapery, and her hair, loosened and deranged, fell in abundance from its confinement.

Edward, in his passion, saw not her situation, but foaming with rage, paced the room with a heavy tread, trampling heedlessly upon the scattered jewels as they lay in his way; but on coming so near the object of his wrath, as to get his spur entangled in the bright mass of brown hair that lay scattered in its beauty over the floor, he stopped in his hurried walk, and carefully disentangling his foot, raised her in his arms and bore her to the couch. In doing so, he passed the frightened Ruth, who shrank back to avoid him, and his anger took a new direction. "Begone, minion," he cried, in a voice of thunder, forgetting in his wrath it was a female he addressed, "begone, I say, and come not hither again to sow discord and mischief. Away," he repeated, turning furiously from the couch, "and speak not of what has passed, or by my crown, thy father's head shall have company upon the scaffold."

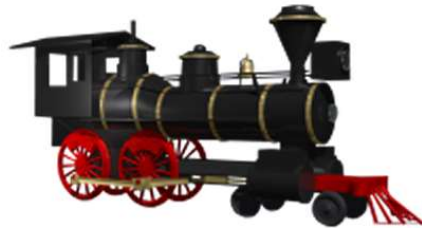
Years had passed by since the foregoing scene, when Edward, while in the very prime of manhood, had been called before the bar of Him who judges the monarch as rigorously as the beggar. Richard, the hunchback, of murderous memory, with the assassin's dagger, had cut his way to the crown; and in order to justify, among other enormities, the death of Lord Hastings, he condemned the unhappy Jane Shore to be stripped of her possessions, and cast into the street to perish, forbidding all on pain of death rendering her succor or sustenance. Meanwhile, Ruth had passed through much of suffering. Her character had been strengthened by affliction; and as one tie after another that bound her to her fellow men was severed, she but applied herself more anxiously to perform the duties that remained. The sorrows that had clouded her life led her pure thoughts to that after state of bliss where

she looked forward to join those that the hand of tyranny had torn from her.

Her mother had never recovered from the state of torpid sorrow which we described in the beginning of our story. Soon after the execution of her husband, she, too, died unconscious of the event. The little boy soon followed; and Ruth, except her Uncle Shore, was left alone to struggle through a world she had so much cause to fear. She took up her residence with that kind uncle, and by degrees won him to something like cheerfulness.

Ruth was one morning drawn to the door by the noise of many feet upon the pavement. Surprise and pity kept her there, on seeing a miserable female in front of their dwelling, whom the brutal crowd were urging forward, notwithstanding her state of utter exhaustion. On seeing

Ruth, she feebly approached the steps, and in a voice of touching misery, entreated for one piece of bread. The generous girl turned to grant her request, notwithstanding some one from the crowd called to inform her that death would be the consequence. In passing through the ware-room to procure the bread, Ruth met her uncle. He, too, had heard that voice of entreaty, and though as yet ignorant of the barbarous cruelty of the tyrant, he had instantly recognized in its hollow sounds, notes that had fallen sweetly on his ear in happier times. Wildly he rushed to the pavement, and there in all her misery, for the first time since her disgrace, the husband and the wife met. When Ruth returned with bread for the wretched woman, she was a corpse in the arms of her husband.



DORA AHERTON;
OR, THE SCHOOLMASTER'S DAUGHTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE VALLEY FARM."

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1851, by Charles J. Peterson, as the proprietor, in the Clerk's Office, of the District Court of the U. S., in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.]

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 45.

THE funeral was quiet, for the old man had but few friends: the innkeeper, a neighboring farmer, and one or two others.

When the rattling clods fell on the coffin, it was as if a volley of musketry struck Dora to the heart. She thought she should die under the terrible torture, thrice repeated with the words, "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." She almost shrieked outright.

But when the clergyman came to the sentence, which he pronounced with rapturous hope, "I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord," a rush of joyous consolation swept over her soul, bringing sweet tears of relief to her eyes.

She slept that night at the little inn. The kind host knew well how agonizing it would be for her to return to the empty house, and so his wife insisted on taking Dora home with her. The orphan, with the morbidness of grief, would have preferred her lonely chamber; but her friends knew this would be too much for her. The good matron remained with her, till she fell asleep, not comforting her by words, but mingling her tears with those of the desolate girl—a better means of consolation!

It was a day or two before Dora fully realized the loss she had sustained. But when the excitement was over, then the terrible blow that had befallen her, became more perceptible. She felt now how utterly lonely she was. Her solitary life, with no one but her father for company, had rendered his sympathy necessary, as it were, to existence. And now she had neither Paul, nor him.

But, after a short interval of overwhelming sorrow, she rallied. It was imperative, she knew, that she should provide, in some way, for earning her own livelihood. The lease on the little cottage had expired with her father's life, and though no new occupant had been provided for it and the school, she was aware that the trustees only waited till she should vacate it. Moreover there were debts to be paid, most of them incurred by the sickness and funeral of the old

schoolmaster: and these Dora had no means of discharging except by selling the furniture. Accordingly an inventory was taken, and an auction held.

On the day of the sale Dora shut herself up at the inn. She could not bear to see strangers carelessly turning over the books she and the dead had perused together; she could not endure to hear gossiping housewives chaffering over the tables and cheapening the chairs: nor could she even bring herself to listen to the noisy bell, which the constable's little son bore through the village, clamorously announcing the auction.

After the debts of the deceased were paid, the sum left in Dora's hands was pitifully small. She had not expected much, but she was disappointed to find it so very little; and, for awhile, her heart failed her. For what could she do? Where should she turn? Her friends, in the village, were comparatively humble, and could not afford to maintain her, even if her self-respect stooped to let them.

And now she saw the necessity of leaving —, as her father and she had often foretold she would. In so small and poor a place there was no employment to be found, except a servile one. Dora was of a sanguine temperament. She knew she had accomplishments, and she felt that she possessed energy: to the city, therefore, she resolved to go. Nor did her friends dissuade her. Both the clergyman and innkeeper told her that, in a great city, she could easily find some avenue to respectable employment: a situation as teacher or governess, they felt certain, could be obtained in time, if not immediately, for both had the highest opinion of Dora's abilities.

They did not suffer her to depart unassisted. The clergyman, indeed, could give her no money, for his own salary was in arrears, and he consequently in debt; but he made her the bearer of letters of introduction to several of his influential acquaintances. The innkeeper, as he closed the stage-door behind her, and shook hands in farewell, quietly slipped a ten dollar bill into her palm. The sum was not much to give, perhaps,

but the giving pinched the kind donor for many a day.

The tears fell fast from Dora's eyes as the coach rolled away from the village. Fortunately she was, as yet, the only passenger, and could, therefore, indulge her grief unchecked. She did not look up till the vehicle rattled over the bridge. Then she stole a sudden glance in the direction of the cottage, where she had spent so many happy hours. She thought of Paul. Often had she walked with him, down the leafy road, listening entranced to his eloquent words. Where was he now? Dead also? Treacherous? Alas! she would sooner have believed the former; but she feared she had not even that poor consolation. With a burst of indignant pride she banished the thought of her unworthy lover. It seemed, indeed, sacrilege to be thinking of him to the exclusion of one who had never pained her in her whole life. She turned to the grave-yard, which the coach was now approaching. It was easy to detect the new-made mound, under the broad spreading oak; and, at the sight, her grief broke forth into audible sobs. She thought of those grey hairs, lying damp in the coffin, which might now have been pressed to her bosom, had not her treacherous lover murdered, yes! murdered the old man, by perfidy to her. And then she almost cursed Paul.

She took lodgings, for a day or two, at a large hotel. She had been advised to do this, notwithstanding the expense, as it would give her a better appearance with those to whom she carried letters of introduction. The morning after her arrival, she sent around these letters. That day, and the next she awaited an answer in vain. On the third morning, when she was beginning to despair, a venerable clergyman called on her; and he was the only one of the four that she ever saw. The others were men of business, who had either purposely forgotten, or neglected her, "having no time," as they said, "to be bothered in that way."

The old minister, with his scrupulously black dress, white neck-cloth, and kind face made Dora feel quite re-assured. She frankly told him her plans.

"I'm afraid, my child," he said, gravely, "your friends have advised you wrong. It is a common error for people in the country to suppose that a great city is sure to afford employment, when the fact is, that the town is the worse place of the two; for though the demand for labor and skill is greater here, the competition disproportionately exceeds it. However we'll see what can be done."

The next day the clergyman came again. He had endeavored to obtain Dora a situation as teacher in one of the public schools, but there

was no vacancy. After that, he had inquired among the private academies, but with a similar failure.

"There is nothing for it, I fear," he said, "but to set up a school yourself. You are too young, indeed, to teach young ladies; and it would require more capital than you have, perhaps; but an infant school might do. I think I could promise you a half dozen children, if not more, from my own congregation."

Dora felt relieved, until inquiring what sum would be necessary to purchase fixtures, she learned, to her dismay, that all the money she had would not half suffice. So she said she would think of it; for she did not like to say how poor she really was: it would seem, she thought, like an indirect appeal to his charity. No, she would endure anything, rather than do that.

"Meantime," she said, "can you refer me to a proper boarding-house? This crowded hotel is agreeable neither to my means, nor to my tastes."

The clergyman promised to inquire for her, and was as good as his word. The next day Dora was installed in a respectable boarding-house. Her bill at the hotel made quite a gulf, however, in her purse; and she shuddered when she thought of it.

She was soon after deprived of the counsel and assistance of the good minister, who was taken seriously ill, and indeed never recovered. The excellent old man had worn himself out in the service of his congregation, and now, being feeble and failing, could not preach with the vigor he once did. On this some of the members became dissatisfied. They wanted a younger and more eloquent man; one who could draw a crowd, as they said: the church was suffering terribly from the prosy sermons of one who was in his dotage. At last the discontent reached such a height, that a committee of the pew owners waited informally on the grey-haired servant of God, and bluntly told him that the church was becoming a losing concern, in consequence of what they brutally called his inefficiency. It was some time before the old man could speak for emotion. At last he said, while the tears came into his eyes, "gentlemen, I may be inefficient in the pulpit—the Lord knows I feel, and have ever felt my shortcomings there—but I am ever first at the bed of death, or when distress invades the households of my flock. A pastor's duty does not consist, I humbly venture to say, merely in brilliant preaching, but more, far more in watching over the flock which God has committed to one's care. However, I will not stand in the way. Six and thirty years I have preached for you, and I have worn myself out in your service; and now, when

I am weak and old, you turn me off, like a broken-down hack, to die on the common." And die he did. This interview happened on the day that Dora changed her lodgings, and, within a month, the broken-hearted clergyman was in his grave. Few knew the cause of his death, for when the committee saw the effect of their heartless selfishness, they hushed the matter up; and, when at last the old man died, none wore larger weepers to their hats, or more reverently solicited permission to carry the bier than these Pharisees of Mammon.

Dora was now utterly friendless. She looked to her own resources, however, like a brave, energetic girl. She did not even wait until the death of the old clergyman, but, at once, began to seek for employment. The idea of the school she abandoned as hopeless. But she thought it not impossible to obtain a situation as governess, and to that end advertised in the newspapers. She soon found, however, that a friendless female has but a poor chance, in a large city, of obtaining employment of this kind. The numbers of what are called distressed gentlewomen, in other words those who are unfit from habits and physical weakness for severe task-work, are always so much greater than the vacancies, that it requires considerable influence to obtain posts of this character, even with their miserable pittance. Week after week glided away, and Dora either had no replies to her advertisement, or else found herself supplanted by some one with more numerous references. Her purse, meantime, was rapidly sinking. She grew heart-sick at the prospect of approaching poverty. Her cheek became thin, and her nerves shattered by the constant pressure of anxiety and the want of her mountain air.

At last she felt the necessity of seeking a cheaper boarding-house; and, with much difficulty, she found one; for everybody was suspicious of a female so young and lonely, and who had nether family nor friends to refer to. In two or three instances her application was rudely repulsed with insult.

Her next resource was to obtain a situation as saleswoman in a store. Of all modes of employment this was one of the most repugnant to her, because of its publicity; but necessity is a hard task-master. With a trembling heart, therefore, she set out, one morning, to seek a place of this character.

She first went to a large and fashionable warehouse, on one of the principal promenades. It was a palace, rather than a store. It was crowded, apparently from morning till night, with buyers; and the number of clerks and shopwomen seemed incredible. Dora fancied that, in so large an establishment, room could easily be found for one more; and she made up her mind, in order

to secure the place, to take any wages that might be offered, no matter how low.

"Is Mr. Brown in?" she said, coloring, as she addressed the clerk nearest the door.

The young man glanced at her superciliously, and, suspecting her errand by her air, answered, "don't know."

She waited for some time, expecting he would speak to her again, but he took no notice of her, but continued volubly extolling his goods to three fashionably dressed ladies before him. So at last she moved further up the store. A middle-aged, pleasant-looking woman attracted her attention finally, and to her Dora now addressed herself.

"Mr. Brown is in the counting-room," said the shopwoman, kindly, "walk back and knock."

So Dora passed, with trembling steps, up the long room. One or two clerks who were idle, turned to gaze at her; and a bookkeeper, perched in a sort of little pulpit, where he was scribbling away with all his might, looked up, a moment, and winked at one of the young men. With a bosom swelling with indignation, and half resolved not to accept the place, after all, if such persons were to be her shopmates, Dora at last reached the counting-room and knocked.

"Come in," said a quick, decided voice.

Dora entered, and, as she did so, a stout, rather florid-looking man, who had been standing with his back to a grate-fire, reading a newspaper, let the sheet fall partially, and waited to be addressed.

"I called, sir," said Dora, who had not even been invited to take a seat, and she spoke with difficulty, for she trembled all over, "I called to see if you wanted a shopwoman."

The man had never taken his gaze from her since she first entered, but had continued to regard her with his keen, hawk like eye. His look was not rude, however, only penetrating. He appeared to be one used to reading character at a glance, and his impressions seemed to be favorable on the whole.

He moved to a side-door, leading into another room, still, however, carrying the paper; and, for a moment, conversed with somebody, probably a partner. When he came back there was a shade of regret on his face.

"I'm sorry to say, miss," he said, "that there are no vacancies in our sales-room, and that the first three that occur are promised in advance. There is always an effort made to get situations in a large establishment like this." He spoke these words with some complacency.

With a sinking heart Dora turned away. She had built so much on this application, she had considered success so certain, that her failure almost overcame her. How she got out of the store she never knew, for her head swam and

her limbs tottered, till she thought she should faint away.

But, after a few minutes in the open air, her energies rallied. Employment she must have, and that at once. Her purse would not hold out for another month, and it would never do to wait till all was gone. No! she must find work immediately. So she choked down her rising pride, and entered another celebrated store. Alas! her reception here was ruder than before. The principal, when he found the object of her visit, turned his back snappishly upon her, muttering something about there being "a dozen such applications daily." The next place was no better. At the fourth she was treated civilly, but had equal ill-success. Nevertheless she kept on, resolute to persevere while there was a shadow of hope; and twilight at last surprised her still engaged in her wearisome task. She had now entered one of the third-rate streets, with the faint hope that, in some humble shop, she might find employment.

"Well, what d'ye want?"

This was the question that greeted her, as she stood at the counter of one of these stores. The speaker was a short, thick-set, sullen, coarse-looking man, who had come forward at first as blandly as he could, thinking he had a customer, but who, on detecting, from the expression of Dora's face, that a suppliant, not a buyer, was before him, thus spoke.

Dora, in faint words, for she was weak with the day's walking, and weaker still with its crushing disappointments, stated her object.

"No, I don't want anybody," said the man, hastily. "I've the devil's own time to get along myself: the big stores eat up all the trade from the little ones."

Dora, faint and hopeless, stood for a moment to rest her weary limbs, holding to the counter.

"Why don't you go?" said the man, angrily. "I tell you I'm not wanting any help. Come, walk. I believe, by —, you're a street tramper, and want to steal my goods."

He took up the yard-stick, as he spoke, and made a threatening step forward. In terror, disgust and despair Dora turned away and hurried from the shop. The man, soured by want of success, which he attributed to a competition he could not meet, but which was traceable as well to his own surly manner, was like a savage beast: at least so he seemed to Dora.

That night, for the first time, Dora really despaired. Her health had been broken down, by long weeks of anxiety; and, with health, her energetic spirits had also fled. It is ever so. The happy feel competent for any trial. And why? Because their physical energies sustain their mental ones. But let them once suffer, as

the miserable suffer, and they will become as reduced in strength, and as despondent as the most hopeless.

"Oh! little did I think it would come to this," said Dora, with tears, as she sat in her room, counting over and over the contents of her purse. "Only ten dollars left, and no prospect of employment. It is no longer a question of self-denial, it is one of starvation."

And then she leaned her head on her hand, and fled, in fancy, to the old cottage, and to the happy times when, with Paul and her father, she had watched the evening star in the west, or looked for the moon rising above the tree-tops. The vision of those delicious evenings made her present desolation more terrible than ever. Big tears gathered in her eyes and rolled heavily down her cheek, falling on the table with a dead sound like the first drops of a thunder-shower.

She thought of the quiet grave-yard, and of her father sleeping there at rest. She thought of the venerable church, of the ancient oaks, of the placid pond, and, for a moment, she wished herself sleeping, in her coffin, side by side with her parent. But the impious thought was cast from her almost as soon as the tempter suggested it.

"Father Almighty," she cried, sinking to her knees, "save me, save me from these terrible thoughts. Give me strength to drink this cup of suffering. Oh! thou who art the orphan's friend, I know thou wilt interpose in thine own good time: and, till then teach me to bear all meekly, as He, the sinless one, bore railings and buffetings for me."

She arose refreshed, and with new courage. That night, too, she slept sweetly. Dreams of the old times came to her in vision. She walked with her father, down the leafy road, while Paul smiled lovingly upon her. Then the scene changed. Heaven, with its glories, its peace, its immaculate felicity, was about her; and her father, shining in white robes, came to her and bade her be comforted.

"I will give way no more," she said, when she awoke at dawn, "at least I will struggle bravely to keep up. Heavenly Father, I thank thee," she said, fervently, "for the blessed vision of the night. And oh! my own dear parent, if indeed you still watch over me, be near to cheer and comfort me in my deep distress."

That day week she removed to another and still cheaper boarding-house. It was located in a narrow, side-street, and was chiefly patronised by seamstresses and other female operatives. Its inducements to Dora were the low price and the tidiness of the dwelling.

She had now sunk to that depth of despair that any sort of employment would have been

welcome to her. Starvation stared her so closely in the face that, in order to stave it off awhile, she pawned such of her apparel as she could spare, leaving herself only a thin shawl for the bitter winter weather that was approaching. She resolved, at last, to apply for a servant's place, every other resource having been exhausted.

Accordingly she went to an intelligence office, paid her fee, and was referred to a lady who wished a chamber-maid.

Dora, though pale and thin, had still an air so different from a servant in search of a place, that, when she knocked at the house to which she had been sent, she was ushered into the parlor.

It was a spacious room, and splendidly furnished. Damask lounges, Saxony carpets, lace curtains, statuettes, and all the other elegancies of wealth and taste were scattered, in picturesque negligence, about the apartment. On the carved centre-table stood a prayer-book, bound in purple velvet, with gold clasps: and near at hand, somewhat ostentatiously exhibited, was an embroidery frame, with a rich altar-cloth half worked.

Directly the mistress of the mansion entered the room, clad in an exquisite morning gown, and her whole air full of high-bred lassitude. She bowed courteously to Dora, but waited for the visitor to speak.

"I am told, ma'am," said Dora, "that you are in want of a chamber-maid."

The start of surprise and hauteur, with which the fine lady rose from her seat, was the most natural thing she had been guilty of for a long time. She crossed the room hurriedly, her delicate slippers scarcely making an impression on the carpet, and vigorously rang the bell. A servant hastened at the summons.

"Show this girl out into the kitchen," she said, "send for the housekeeper—the young woman is wanting the chamber-maid's place—but you may tell Mrs. Moore she won't do—she's so shocked my nerves, that I shall never be able to endure her sight." And dropping, with a fidget, into a luxurious fauteuil, she picked up a superb feather fan, and began fanning herself rapidly.

The footman understood the hint, and without further ado hustled Dora out of the house, as if she had been a being of a different order from his elegant and nervous mistress.

Many more scenes like the above Dora had to go through. Most generally she failed, because she had no reference. Some refused her for her confession that she had never before "lived out:" others thought her too young, and, therefore, presumed she was too giddy; and a few brutally told her that they believed she sought a place only to get opportunities to steal, "a pretty face,

and just such a story of being without friends had taken them in once before, and they didn't think they should be caught again."

What to do now she could not tell. She was at the end of her resources, and in three weeks she would be penniless. To crown all, one evening, as she was coming home from a fruitless search after employment, she stopped to buy some thread, and, in putting her purse back into her pocket, let it fall to the ground. At least, on reaching her lodgings, she missed it, and could account for its loss in no other way. She hurried back, late as it was, to the little shop where she had made her purchase, but the woman who kept it, knew nothing, or affected to know nothing of the missing money. All the way home, Dora carefully scrutinized the pavement, going and returning many times, until at last, a rude stranger addressing her coarsely, she hurried to her lodgings in affright.

The blow almost stunned her. She was now literally penniless, a beggar in the full sense of the term. Where to turn, whither to look, she knew not. The crisis she had so long feared, had come, and she might, for all she knew, be turned into the streets to-morrow.

For she now recollected that her week's board was up that very evening; and by morning, at furthest, the landlady would be demanding it. Suddenly a thought struck her: it appeared a last ray of hope; and, like one drowning, she clutched at the idea eagerly.

During the long hours she had spent, for weeks past, in her room, she had been engaged in embroidering a handkerchief, a kind of work in which she greatly excelled. It had been in buying thread for this very employment that she had lost her purse. It now struck her that, though the handkerchief was still unfinished, she might find some store-keeper liberal enough to advance a small sum on it, leaving the balance to remain until she could complete the work. Flattering herself with this hope, she retired early to rest, for she had, now for three days, denied herself a fire, in order to economize, and she felt chilled through.

With early dawn she awoke, dressed, and went out, without waiting for breakfast. She had passed a wakeful night. She could neither sleep, nor eat, indeed, until she knew the result of this last experiment.

It was a bitter morning, in the dead of winter. A storm of sleet had set in during the night, and was still raging, the rain and hail driving in wild gusts downward, and freezing as soon as it fell. The pavements were sheeted an inch deep with ice, so that the few pedestrians abroad took to the carriage-way for a safer footing. Everywhere the trees were borne down, and in some places

broken by the weight of frozen hail. Icicles, huge and fantastic, depended from the eaves of the houses. The wind howled dismally around the corners, rattled through the loose shutters, and shrieked shrilly down the long streets. It was a day when one would not have turned a murderer from his doors; and for squares on squares not a vehicle could be seen, or a human being met.

Dora carried an old, faded umbrella, but it was soon coated with a thick covering of frozen sleet; and, with difficulty, more than once, could she prevent it being turned inside out by the wind. A thin shawl was her sole protection against the cold and wet. At every step the icy fringe of this light, summer covering rattled on her stiff and frozen frock. Frequently, as she passed along, the servant girls came to their doors, to go on hasty errands, but after a glance at the tempest turned back into the house, though not without a sympathizing look after Dora. Now a gust of wind dashing the sleet into her face, almost blinded her for a moment; and now a blast, whirling around a corner, drove her, hurrying and trembling, before it.

For more than two hours she wandered up and down, offering her handkerchief for sale; but without success. Nobody would even look at it. "They did not want unfinished work," said some. Others replied crustily that "they never bought any but French handkerchiefs."

At last Dora, hopeless and heart-broken, turned to go home. But how should she meet her landlady? She had walked briskly on, as briskly as the storm would allow, while a hope of success remained; but now she moved wearily, as if dreading to reach the end of her journey. Even that bitter tempest was welcome to her in preference to facing her angry debtor.

She reached her boarding-house at last. Hastily entering, she passed along a narrow hall, and up a crooked staircase, until she reached a back garret, looking down into a confined yard. A cot bedstead, a table, a single chair, and her trunk formed the furniture of the room, the walls of which, on this day, were damp with moisture. Dora wearily threw off her bonnet and shawl, and then, sinking on the chair, leaned her arms on the table and buried her face in her hands.

She had scarcely done this, when her composure gave way entirely. Wild sobs shook her frame: and, at last, her anguish found vent in words.

"Oh! Father in heaven," she said, lifting her face above, "is there none to help? Hast thou, too, deserted me?"

Again a tempest of sobs shook her, choking all utterance.

"No work—no money—no friends," she re-

sumed, after awhile, "and no hope. Oh! Lord Almighty have mercy."

She groaned aloud. A knock at the door startled her, even in her great anguish.

She rose to her feet, looked wildly around, and the knock being repeated, hastily brushed the tears from her eyes, and by a mighty effort choked down her sobs.

"Come in," she said, firmly, nerving herself to meet the worst.

But her heart shook nevertheless, for she foreboded it was the landlady.

Her fears proved correct. The door opened, and the landlady entered. Dora gave a hasty glance at the intruder, and thought she had never seen a countenance in which so little sympathy was uppermost.

The landlady, indeed, was not very prepossessing. She was between fifty and sixty years old, and had never been beautiful; but now her face was furrowed by a life of toil and care, till every feature was as hard, and seemingly as cold as a rock. A pair of small grey eyes, of the kind that look right through you, fixed themselves, at once, searchingly on Dora. Their expression, it was difficult to analyze: it might be cupidity, or avarice, or both; but it was certainly not kindness. Perhaps suspicion is the word that best describes it.

Dora had promptly offered the landlady her chair. But the attention was declined gruffly.

"I want no foolish ceremony, young woman," began the landlady immediately, after a sharp glance around, at the end of which she fixed her eyes again keenly on Dora, "I suppose you guess my object. I came for the week's board, due last night, and which ought to have been paid then."

Dora colored to the temples, her whole frame trembling nervously. She felt that those sharp, twinkling eyes had penetrated her secret already. She looked down, then sideways, then glanced timidly at the landlady. She could not meet the eye of her visitor. Never before had she wanted courage, but now she almost wished the floor would open and swallow her.

"Well?"

It was the landlady that spoke; and she elevated her eyebrows.

"I—I cannot," began Dora, stammeringly, still looking down.

But her visitor sharply interrupted her.

"What, the old story? No money, is it? Then allow me to ask, young woman," she cried, "what right had you to hire my garret? I'd scarcely go wrong to give you over to the constable for a vagabond."

There was a time when Dora's haughty spirit would have resented language like this; but now,

physically worn out and unnerved, she only burst into hysterical sobbing.

"Humph!" said the landlady, with something of a sneer.

For awhile Dora sobbed uncontrollably. But at last she essayed to speak, for the landlady stood evidently waiting on her, an incredulous curl upon her lip.

"I didn't mean," said Dora, "to defraud you—indeed, ma'am, I didn't—but last night I lost my purse. I've been out seeking work—or trying to sell a handkerchief I embroidered—but I couldn't get anything to do."

All this had been said brokenly. And now, as another rush of shame at her indebtedness swept over her, she gave away again to irresistible sobs.

For some time yet the landlady watched her, but finally spoke. It was abruptly, and apparently on a strange subject.

"How many days," she said, "since you have had fire here?"

"Three."

"You couldn't have had much in your purse, then, or you wouldn't have frozen for three days up here."

At this fresh imputation, as Dora thought it, on her honesty, the orphan roused up. The first burst of shame had passed, and indignation at this brutal treatment began to supplant every other feeling. Her eyes flashed as she answered,

"Had I intended to defraud you, ma'am, I would not have worked here till my fingers were benumbed with cold—but I should have had a fire and been comfortable, for the time, at least."

At this spirited reply the landlady stared on Dora with surprise, not unmixed with admiration. And, in truth, the orphan girl at that moment, looked positively grand. Her dilated form, her proud head, her blazing eyes, and her arms extended defyingly, reminded one of a haughty queen, repelling insult, rather than of a debtor replying to a creditor's taunt.

But the landlady had not meant what Dora had supposed, and she spoke in a milder tone.

"There's no need of getting into a passion, miss," she said, "you mistake me. But you say you have been embroidering—let me see what you've done."

Dora brought out the handkerchief, which the landlady turned over and over, carefully examining it. Not satisfied with this, she sat down, took out her spectacles, wiped them carefully, and then proceeded to scrutinize the work again. As she spread the handkerchief on the table, the Bible was in her way. She took it up, turned to the back to see what book it was, gave a quick, sharp glance at Dora, and then bent to her task. The result appeared to be satisfactory; for, when she had concluded, she looked at Dora, from head

to foot, with evident interest. And now, for the first time, she noticed Dora's wet dress.

"Why didn't you come down stairs to the fire?" she said. "You haven't been sitting, all this while, in that wet frock? And without a bit of breakfast either? Why, you crazy child, you'll be sick yet."

She spoke roughly, but still not as she had spoken; and taking Dora by the arm she fairly pushed her out of the room.

"Here—come into my chamber," she said, pausing at the first landing, and opening a door. "I always keep a little fire in my own room, for I like to be alone, when I am not busy down stairs."

It was a small chamber, and plainly furnished; but exceedingly neat. A stove, now at a red-heat, stood in front of the fire-place; and close by it was a little, old-fashioned round table, on which stood a work-box, a half-knit stocking, and, strangest of all, as Dora thought, a large, well-thumbed Bible.

"Sit there," said the landlady, putting a chair close to the stove, "put these on your feet," she added, producing a pair of dry stockings and slippers. "And now dry your clothes, while I mix you a little medicine."

With that this eccentric creature bustled to a closet, took out a small bottle, and pouring something from it into a tumbler, added sugar, and then hot water, which boiled in a hissing kettle on the stove. The whole she stirred briskly with a silver tea-spoon.

"There, drink this," she said: and, as Dora hesitated, she added, authoritatively, "I know best what's good for you. Why you'll be having the quincy, or a fever, or perhaps a consumption. Many a one, stouter than you, has died of sitting in wet stockings for half the time."

There was so much real kindness in her manner now, notwithstanding the rough way in which she spoke, that Dora drank the draught off without any reply except a grateful look.

"Now you'll feel better," said the landlady, putting down the glass, and fetching a footstool, which she knelt to place for Dora. "And so, if you please, we'll proceed to business."

Dora, who was ready to shed tears again at this unexpected kindness, now felt her heart flutter once more; but the first words of the landlady re-assured her.

"I'm a rough woman, miss, as you've seen," she said, "but it's not always a cold heart, or a hard one that is concealed under a wrinkled face." Dora felt the reproof. "Those who are honest, as I believe you to be, have nothing to fear from me. If I spoke harshly to you, up stairs, it was because I did not know you; and one who keeps a boarding-house for poor folk,

as I do, learns to be suspicious, for between the idle and the wicked," and she shook her head sadly, "half of one's lodgers cheat whenever they can."

Big tears were now slowly welling from Dora's eyes and rolling down her cheeks. This kindness where she had looked for harshness, this friendliness when her desolation had reached its climax, affected her, in her low, weak state, more than all the sorrows she had endured since she came to the city. So she sat looking at the red stove through her dim eyes, yet feeling indescribably happy.

"When you answered me so truly that, if you had intended to cheat me," resumed the landlady, moving about the room, setting things to rights mechanically, "you would not have sat, three days, without a fire, I began to fear that I had mistaken your character; and when I found, on your table, a Bible that looked as if it had been read, I knew it for a certainty. God bless you, darling," she said, suddenly, as, for the first time, she noticed Dora's silent tears, "don't take it so to heart. I've been without a penny more than once myself, and know what it is; and I hadn't a friend either, which you have, and will have, as long as you deserve it, in me."

She spoke with some emotion, and as she ceased, she placed her hand on Dora's shoulder. As if by an uncontrollable impulse the poor girl suddenly seized it, drew it to her mouth, and kissed it. That old withered hand was fairer to her, at that moment, than the most beautiful one in the world.

The good landlady seemed ashamed of the mute homage thus paid to her. She hastily withdrew the hand, and said,

"Render thanks, my dear, to the Creator, not to the creature. I am but a poor worm of the dust, who am as often unjust as just to my fellow creatures; and I ought now to be asking your pardon for speaking so harshly to you, up stairs, instead of, receiving this reverence. However," she continued, and she drew the back of her hand hastily across her eye, as if she was herself not unaffected, "this is not business. I'm disposed to be your friend, but I'm not rich myself, or I wouldn't be keeping a cheap boarding-house," and she gave an almost imperceptible sigh; then, resuming with more cheerfulness, added, "and so we must put our heads together to see what we can get for you to do. You shan't starve, or freeze, but, if I know you, you don't want to be beholden to any one."

"I will do anything," said Dora, eagerly. "I have tried everywhere, but in vain."

"This handkerchief is very pretty work," said the landlady, taking it up from the table, where she had laid it, "but to find a customer for it

one must know some fine lady, and even then she would buy it for charity as much as anything else. They embroider these things so much cheaper in the old country that such work don't pay here."

Dora heard this with a sigh. She had calculated much on that handkerchief.

"But," continued the landlady, "there are other things you can do. Not anything, indeed, that will pay very well," she said, sadly, "for wages get worse every year, and what will become of poor people by-and-bye, nobody knows."

She went on, after a pause, in which she seemed to think.

"I've a young woman boarding with me, about your own age, who sews for the tailor shops, and she can get you steady work, I guess; for I heard her say, only this morning, that they were very busy now. It wouldn't take you long to learn. You can sew?"

She looked inquiringly as she spoke, at Dora's hands, but when she saw how small they were, her sanguine tone fell.

"Oh! yes, I can sew," said Dora, quickly, holding up her finger, blue with thread-marks, "see!"

The landlady smiled approvingly, shaking her head.

"Well then," she said, "we'll soon fix it. The wages are low, very low, but even slop work is better than nothing. The fact is the master tailors want all the profit. There's Mr. Thomaston, whom you'll work for," she continued, indignantly, "he rides in his carriage and drinks champagne every day, they say—while hundreds like you and Susan can scarcely support themselves on the wages he pays. But there's a time of reckoning coming for him," said this kind, eccentric old creature, her sharp grey eyes flashing under the contracted brows. "It's such as him the apostle means, when he says, 'go to ye rich men, weep and howl,' or the Lord Jesus himself, when he declared 'that a rich man should scarcely enter the kingdom of heaven.' So take heart, miss: the wicked shall not always prevail."

Dora looked up in surprise. There was an earnestness, almost an enthusiasm in the speaker's manner, that bespoke the deep-rooted nature of her convictions. Her use of Scriptural language had nothing of cant, but was apparently the natural expression of one, whose reading had been confined almost entirely to the Bible.

"Come," said the landlady, noticing Dora's strange look, and half smiling, if one so grim in face could be said to smile, "I must not talk this way, or I will frighten you. But you'd think strongly too, if you'd suffered so long. I want to hear your story, for your manners show you to be born a lady, and from your dress and poverty I suppose you are an orphan. Speak, my dear,

and tell me all. Even if I am mistaken, and you are homeless because you have done wrong, you need not fear to speak."

And Dora, won by this strange kindness, did speak, and told all. All, at least, except what related to Paul. To that maiden delicacy forbade her even alluding.

Before she had finished, the landlady was sitting, with Dora's hand in hers, tears falling fast from those eyes which Dora, but an hour before, had thought so pitiless.

When she had concluded, the landlady, after a pause, spoke,

"Well, my dear, there is nothing, in all you have told me, pleases me so well as to discover, from the way you speak, that you fear God. I am an old woman, and have seen my share of sorrow in my time. A husband, and two dear children have been, for twenty years, in heaven, I trust; while I have been left alone, to fight with poverty, and even to suffer, at times, from sheer destitution. Nothing but my Bible could have supported me through all this. It has told me that the righteous shall never be forsaken, or their seed left to beg bread. I have still to work for my living indeed, and expect to work till I die; but I have a comfortable home, when others are starving—the Lord, and he alone, have thanks therefor! I've a little, too, to help others. But don't thank me, darling," she said, putting up her hand, as she saw Dora's grateful look, "for what I have done for you, but rather the Master, whose talent I strive not to bury."

"But now," she said, changing the theme, "I must leave you, to attend to preparing dinner. You need rest—stay here meanwhile. When I come back I will bring Susan with me." She departed as she spoke.

Left to herself, Dora's heart went out in gratitude to heaven. Gradually, however, she sank away into slumber. The hot fire, combined with her physical exhaustion, made her irresistibly drowsy, so that she did not rouse up till the landlady returned, more than an hour after.

"You've had a nice sleep, I see," said the bustling, kind old woman, "and feel quite a different being, I don't doubt. I've brought Susan with me."

She introduced the two girls, who mutually took a survey of each other. Dora had met her new acquaintance before at table, but had never exchanged more than a few words with her. Now, however, she looked at her critically.

Susan Moore was a tall, thin, graceful girl, dressed with much taste, though necessarily in the plainest materials. But she had a figure to set off even a common print, which was what she wore. Her complexion was brilliant, and her eyes of a lively blue. The contour of her head

was Grecian, even to that great defect of the classic model, the low forehead. Dora concluded, at once, that her new friend was amiable, though not, perhaps, very talented.

"I hope we shall be very good friends," said Dora, kissing her. "I owe you thanks already, for Mrs. Harper has promised, in your behalf, that you will introduce me at Mr. Thomaston's."

Susan smiled delightedly.

"Oh! don't say a word," she cried, "I'm sure I'm the obliged person. I've so long wanted to know you better, Miss Atherton; there was something high and grand about you: not haughtiness, I don't mean; but something like a real lady; and it was that which kept me from speaking to you, as I would have done to any other, though I was dying to do it a dozen times. I'll go with you to Thomaston's to-morrow. But it's a hard life," she said, with a sigh.

"We can't have everything as we wish, in this world," said Mrs. Harper, sententiously, "or I wouldn't be keeping a boarding-house in my old age. But I'm thankful to have that."

"Oh! to be sure," volubly continued Susan. "One's thankful, and all that, but still, when my shoulder aches, as it does sometimes, and when my eyes grow weary, I think it hard that I should not have been born rich, and had a carriage to ride in."

"And plenty of fine dresses," said Mrs. Harper, smiling significantly, and shaking her head. "Ah! Susan, I'm afraid that's your especial weakness. You're a good girl, but a little vain."

Susan did not seem to resent the characteristic bluntness of the landlady: she had probably become accustomed to it, by this time. She answered,

"I own I like elegant dresses; why shouldn't I? It's better to look nice than old-fashioned, isn't it?"

If Dora had expressed her thoughts, at that moment, she would have told Susan that her dress, though fashionable, was less nice than it might be. But Mrs. Harper was not so forbearing.

"All very well, my child," she said, "but I'd rather see a girl look old-fashioned than untidy, which you do sometimes, Susan, as you know. But that's not exactly what I meant either. It's the thought, and time, and money you consume on your dress, my dear, all of which might be given more profitably to other things. The Lord meant us to look as beautiful as we could, no doubt; but he didn't mean we should place too much store on it:—and that's what he intended when he said, 'consider the lilies of the field, they toil not, neither do they spin.' This vanity, Susan, leads many a poor girl into trouble."

Susan colored at this plain speaking, and retorted a little sharply,

"I don't see, Mrs. Harper, what the Bible has to do with a girl's dressing as handsomely as she can. You're always quoting the Bible."

The landlady looked at the speaker, and replied more mildly than was her wont,

"It has a great deal to do with it, my dear. If you read your Bible more, Susan, you wouldn't waste your money on foolish dress; but would lay by a little store for a rainy day."

"I'd like to know how I could do that," replied Susan, "on two dollars a week, and sometimes even less? I've as good a right to dress well, with my own money, as others. And its unjust, I repeat, that I have to work so hard for that money, when so many, no better than I, have nothing to do, all day, but dress in handsome clothes, ride about shopping, or go to the theatre or opera when they please. Don't you think so, Miss Atherton?"

She turned eagerly to Dora as she spoke. Susan had often endured Mrs. Harper's scoldings, as she called them, before; but never, as now, in the presence of a third party whose good opinion she desired to propitiate. She was anxious to have Dora on her side.

Thus appealed to, Dora answered frankly,

"I'm afraid, Susan, that the rich, if we only knew it, have their troubles as well as we; and that, in the distribution of happiness, they do not have much the advantage of us."

"You don't mean it?"

Her eyes were wide open with amazement. She had evidently never imagined the possibility of such a thing.

Dora smiled, and continued,

"They don't suffer, as we do, from poverty. They don't have to work for bread, when they are worn out with fatigue. But they have other troubles—idleness, for instance——"

"Idleness. Oh! I wish I had that trouble." And Susan fairly clapped her hands.

"Yes! *ennui*, as the French call it." And then, reflecting that Susan did not know French, and might think her vain-glorious, she blushed and continued, "I mean that time hangs heavy on their hands. The want of occupation, proper exercise of mind and body, leads to a thousand undefinable ailments. Nowhere have physicians so many patients as among the women of the upper classes."

"That's just what I have often thought," said Mrs. Harper, admiringly, "but I never could have expressed it so well. And now I must go, for time is precious with me: the table has yet to be set."

"And I must go back to that velveteen," said Susan, with a rueful face, and she would have

complained more, but that she was a little crest-fallen. "I must sew fast to make up for this half hour."

The next morning was bright and clear. The sun came out resplendent, and every icicle glittered gloriously, while the trees in the public squares shone like a forest of diamonds.

As soon as breakfast was despatched, Susan and Dora set out for Mr. Thomaston's.

The clothing emporium, as its proprietor magniloquently called it, was a seven story granite building, with a gilded cupola on the top. Any number of coats and other garments fluttered from the windows and doors, while huge signs at every story announced the cheapness, excellence and fashionable pattern of the articles for sale.

As Dora and her companion entered the door they saw a tall, big-whiskered man, with a face eloquent of good living, standing picking his teeth just inside the entrance. Nearly a dozen clerks flitted about the spacious store, or stood behind the counters in readiness to wait on customers. The establishment, indeed, was one of the largest in the city, and conducted, as the proprietor advertised, "on the most liberal principles:" in other words he studied to sell cheaper than his neighbors, by compelling his workwomen to labor for lower wages; and, by adhering to this simple rule, he had already amassed a large fortune.

He did not deign to notice the two girls. In fact, he was too intensely absorbed in thinking of the excellent breakfast from which he had just risen.

Susan led the way toward the back of the store, where a short, untidy-looking man, in a pair of slippers down at the heel, and a shaggy head of uncombed hair, received Susan's bundle, the contents of which he examined, preparatory to paying for it.

"You don't sew as neatly as you did at first," he said, gruffly. "Better take more pains, next time, miss, or when work gets scarcer you'll find yourself on the list of those to be discharged."

Susan tossed her head and pouted, but said nothing. The man proceeded to pay her, and then made up another bundle. When he had done this, Susan introduced Dora, and explained the purport of her visit.

"Ah! very well, she can have something on trial," he said, after a short scrutiny of the new applicant. "You understand the terms?" he continued, addressing Dora, "any damage done to the cloth to be paid for; and your work cash, as soon as delivered. Them's our rules. We don't keep a long account, and then cheat the workwomen, like some of our neighbors; but give a fair price and pay up on delivery."

Dora was glad to escape from this temple of Mammon. The coarse vulgarity of the foreman,

visible in his dress and face, as well as in his tone, was only surpassed by the innate vulgarity of the proprietor, which even his fine dress could not conceal.

"Well, how do you like your work?" said Mrs. Harper, coming into the room, just before dinner—she had insisted on Dora's sewing in her chamber, so as to have the benefit of a stove—"it's a hard life, harder for you than Susan, though you make no complaint."

Dora looked cheerfully up.

"I have done so much," she said, holding up her work. "Not a very promising beginning, but I hope to succeed better, by-and-bye. I shall not earn enough to pay my board, the first week, though, since you've agreed to trust me, I've no doubt I shall do it eventually."

"I'm glad to see you so hopeful," replied Mrs. Harper. "I was afraid you would be discouraged."

"I believe I'm naturally of a sanguine temperament," said Dora, smiling. "But if I wasn't, what would be the use of regrets? Though I've been thinking, as I sat here, that if I was a rich lady, I should endeavor to do something for my poorer sisters, who are forced to sew, from one year's end to another, for the paltry pittance the tailor shops and furnishing establishments give."

"Shirt making pays even worse than this," said the landlady, with a sigh, laying down the work. "I don't know what will be the end of it; for it gets worse every year; and already many a weak-hearted girl, who has not had good parents to give her fixed principles, has taken the wages of sin as preferable to this killing labor." She spoke bitterly. But, after a pause, resumed in a more natural tone, "you sew well, my dear."

"Almost too well for such pay, you would say," replied Dora, looking pleasantly up. "Thirty cents for these pantaloons, and twenty-five cents for that vest, which I have not yet begun. But the smallness of the wages should be no excuse for slighting the work."

"You are right, my child."

Two days after Dora accompanied Susan again to the clothing emporium. It was about noon when they set out. A deep snow, the first of the season, had fallen the night before, and the great thoroughfare, through which part of their way led, was alive with sleighs. The gay equipages, darting hither and thither, with their jingling bells, spirited horses, and freight of youth and beauty, gave the usually humdrum street a most animated appearance. As they approached Mr. Thomaston's, a beautiful vehicle, shaped in front like a swan, and drawn by a bay horse of enormous stride, shot past them, whizzing over the frozen snow; and stopping in front of the store,

a fashionably dressed young man sprang out and entered.

When Dora and Susan opened the door, this person was standing directly in their way, and in moving aside, he recognized Susan, to whom he familiarly nodded. This induced Dora to look at him again.

He was tall and rather graceful, but dressed with a second-rate coxcombry, that Dora could not help contrasting with the simple elegance of Paul's attire. His vest was deep, his coat cut very long in the skirt, and he wore a cravat tied in an enormous bow. A steeple hat, with a flat, and rather broad brim, surmounted a handsome, though sensual-looking face, without whiskers or beard, but displaying a carefully trimmed moustache. At this instant Mr. Thomaston himself came down the store, and addressed the young man: and now Dora knew them, from the strong family likeness, to be father and son. The younger was a fop, and the senior a glutton; and this, besides the disparity of years, seemed to be only the point of difference.

The youth looked rudely, but admiringly at Dora, and when she had passed, turned to follow her with his eyes, though his parent was eagerly asking him how he liked his new trotter. At last the elder lost patience.

"There, don't be staring at my girls," he said, with an oath. "That's a luxury even you, you dog, can't afford—a fast horse is enough, just now." And seeing that his heir had turned at last, he continued, pointing to the handsome bay, that now stood champing the bit, flinging the foam over his shining coat, and making gleeful music from his bells at every toss of his proud head. "Does he come up to the bargain? Will he go, on the road, in two forty?"

"Do it like a jiffy, sir. I passed Stellwyn's fast team just now, as if it had been a span of drowsy Conestogas." And, in another minute, the young coxcomb was deep in the mysteries of horse-flesh.

In about ten minutes Dora and Susan came down the store again. The father stood aside to let them pass, but the son opened the door bowing. He did it, however, in a way so familiar that Dora's cheeks burned indignantly.

"Don't you think him handsome?" said Susan, in a whisper, looking back over her shoulder, when they had gone a pavement or two.

"Who?" said Dora, her eyes flashing.

"Why, young Mr. Thomaston, to be sure."

"He's a puppy."

"Why, Miss Atherton, you're not serious."

"Do you know him? I saw him nod to you."

"Yes! I know him," said Susan, after a moment, with some embarrassment. "That is, he has nodded to me, whenever we have met, lately."

"You ought not to notice him," said Dora, severely, quite severely for her indeed. "Do, dear Susan, reflect that a nod from such as him can only be an insult."

She spoke earnestly, and, as she looked at Susan, what deep entreaty beamed from her eyes. Susan's gaze fell beneath that imploring glance.

Nothing was said for several minutes, during which Dora continued walking rapidly forward, as if eager to get away from the very vicinity of the store.

Suddenly the quick jingle of bells was heard, accompanied by the stride of a powerful horse, and by the loud grating of a sleigh swiftly whirled over the snow. At the same moment a couple of boys, who stood at the corner throwing snow-balls at the different sleighs, shouted, "hi, hi." Some person was evidently approaching at a tremendous pace. The girls looked up.

It was the younger Thomaston. With both hands grasping the reins, and holding on with all his might, a superb buffalo robe streaming far behind, and the pursuing snow-balls vainly

attempting to rival his velocity, he came tearing on, other vehicles making way for him, some with consternation, all with haste. He was evidently enjoying his vulgar display.

His entire object was not apparent, however, until he came opposite Dora, when he turned and looked boldly at her, smiling familiarly and nodding.

He had nearly upset his light vehicle, by thus removing his eyes, even for that instant, from the road. A slight snow bank, made by clearing the opposite pavement, was directly in front, and, while he was still looking back, the feather-like sleigh nearly tilted over.

Susan gave a slight scream. But no harm had been done. The accident, however, re-called the young blood to his duty of charioteer; he gave a sharp hallo, which the horse seemed to understand, for it started forward with a more rapid stride; and before Dora's indignant color had left her cheeks, the swift vehicle was flitting out of sight, far up the long avenue, like a wild pigeon on the wing.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A L O N E.

I've wandered through the city's throng,
Unnoticed by the thousand there;
While living masses poured along,
Some worn and grey, some young and fair.
And loudly rang the din of life,
As countless voices filled the air,
And all were eager in the strife
Of busy toil or pressing care:

I've lingered by the festal board,
Where youth and pleasure gaily meet,
The laugh went round, the wine was poured,
And music trilled to flying feet;
But "mirth upon my lips was dumb"—
I seemed unknowing and unknown;
And as my thoughts within would come,
My spirit sighed, alone! alone!

There is no loneliness so drear,
No sadness has so deep a shade,
As that I feel when crowds are near,
And all life's toys around me laid.
There may be gladness all the while,
There may be feelings deep and strong;
But not for me that glowing smile,
Oh! not for me that gushing song.

Bright eyes may gleam, and pulses thrill,
And yet I'm sad and all alone;
The looks I meet are ever chill—
They turn away—I am not known.

Then let me leave this noise and show,
And give me still my tranquil home,
Where laughing rills in beauty flow,
And jarring strife can never come.

Oh! let me seek some quiet vale,
O'erlaid with moss and decked with green;
Where music fills the gentle gale,
And flowers adorn each tranquil scene.
There is a joy but few can feel,
'Mid forest trees in Summer time,
A grandeur in each solemn peal,
A magic in each merry chime.

I loved sweet Nature's thousand forms,
Her ocean's roar—her mountain high;
There's wild delight in raging storms,
And glory in the arching sky.
The unhewn rocks have shells untold
To turn the wanderer's woe to calm;
And in the waters clear and cold,
My heated brow would seek its balm.

I love to roam the dewy hills
When stars are stealing from on high,
And mist is on the waking rills,
And sunlight gilds the eastern sky.
A voice is in the woodlands then,
Of wildest glee and thrilling tone;
It gushes forth from tree and glen,
And makes me feel I'm not alone. w. s.

RICHARD FLEMMING.

A STORY OF VIRGINIA.

FANNY VELVIN TO PAULINE,
Hazelwood, April 4th, 18—.

DEAR PAULINE—

Though the pleasure of your company is more than I can expect at our humble country home, yet I would not willingly relinquish the privilege of interchanging ideas with one who has ever been a kind friend to me; impressed as I am with the belief that I am not entirely forgotten.

Blest heretofore with the companionship of many young friends, and engaged in my studies at school assiduously, I felt not the want of youthful associates; but now with no young bosom to which I can confide my secrets, I think how much I have lost in you and Leonora, and frequently find myself weeping for the loss. 'Tis true that my beloved old friend is here and anxious to make me happy; but kindness itself may become tedious, and often do I secrete myself in my chamber, or steal away on a lonely walk to elude the benevolent intentions of my dearest guardian and benefactor. Sometimes on my return I find her absorbed in a painful reverie, when she seems unmindful of all things around. Oh! how my heart smites me for ingratitude at such moments! Why do I not go to her, inquire the cause of her grief, and offer her that consolation which it would be her greatest delight to bestow on me if I were in distress.

There is, at such times, something of mystery about her, and she utters words which are unintelligible to me. A few days since I took my bonnet, and accompanied by a large dog which she gave me, I rambled to the river bank, only a few hundred yards distant. It was in early spring, and but few wild flowers had burst their bonds; but the birds were gaily chanting overhead as if to welcome the return of spring, and ever and anon a myriad of little fish would sport to the surface of the water to enjoy a moment's sunshine, and with a gleesome flutter disappear beneath the silver waves. I was so much charmed with every object that met my eye, and every sound that fell upon my ear, that I was unconscious of the lateness of the hour, till the silence of the birds and the darker hue of the water apprised me of the approach of night. I immediately seized my bonnet from the broken bough of a birch where I had hung it, and sought the house. On approaching it I saw no glimmering light through the unclosed window as usual, and a sensation of uneasiness came over me lest my

grandmother, as I call her, disturbed at my protracted stay, had gone out to seek me. With such disagreeable sensations imagine how much they must have been increased, when on arriving in the house I heard frequent groans, which I knew were uttered by my grandmother, mingled with words of accusation and complaint. So disunited, however, were her sentences that I could form no idea of the person accused. The single word "Maria" was uttered very often, and "lost—cruel—mother and murderer" succeeded without any definite meaning that I could discover. Passing noiselessly to the servant's room, I ordered a light and returned hastily. I found my dear old friend sitting calmly in her accustomed chair. After chiding me gently for staying out so late in the humid air, we retired for the night, and next morning she appeared as usual calm and dignified, but kind. Can it be possible that a single crime was ever committed by one who is so good? or that any should ever have sinned against her? If so, and the sin was committed by her, I shall henceforth doubt the possibility of there ever existing in a human breast real virtue and religion: for if they do ever abide in the hearts of mortals, where can there be found one more worthy, more benevolent, and more holy than beats, though now but feebly, in the bosom of my aged friend? Farewell,

FANNY VELVIN.

LEONORA LINDSAY TO FANNY VELVIN,
Lindsay Farm, April 15th, 18—.

DEAR FANNY—

Come to Lindsay Farm with all speed if you love Leonora. We are to have a grand festival on the twenty-first, when I shall be seventeen years old, and many young folks, of both sexes, are to be here. I have just received a letter from Pauline, our schoolmate two years ago at Mrs. G——'s, who informs me that "owing to previous engagements she cannot do herself the honor of attending my birth-day party." Oh, how was I grieved in the perusal of her letter—she has acquired the same cold, but *very* polite style of which we complained in the perusal of Julia Meredith's letters to us, from town, after she left school. You recollect her fate, poor girl! and if such a destiny awaits Pauline—but let us hope for the best.

Did I mention Robert St. Clare in my last letter? but I am sure I did not. I wish you could

see him—he is tall and very elegantly formed, and of fine manners. Oh! Fanny, if I did not feel certain of your secrecy I would not go on, but I have never had a secret from my dear friend, and I will not have one now. He *loves* me then, (nay, start not) he has never told me so, but there is a language in the eye which we all understand, and I can read his soul in every glance. Would you ask “if his love is reciprocated?” Can a woman withhold her affections from the man, who, of all the world, she thinks most perfect? Oh! Fanny, if I had all the accomplishments, both mental and personal, that ever graced our sex from the creation of our first parents—all that ever man adored concentrated in my single self, I could not think them more worthily bestowed than on Robert St. Clare. If you ask me, do I love him, I answer that *I do*. Adieu,

YOUR LEONORA.

FANNY TO PAULINE,

Lindsay Farm, May 4th, 18—.

DEAR PAULINE—

I am, as you will observe from the place whence I write, with Leonora Lindsay. She insisted on my coming to her birth-day party so emphatically that I could not refuse, and I have been here since the twentieth of April.

All was hurry, bustle and confusion when I arrived here, in preparation for the feast which was to come off next day—and *that* day was one not soon to be forgotten by me. We rose quite early, and accompanied by Mr. St. Clare, a young gentleman who is very much attached to Leonora, and a friend of his who is from the city on a hunting excursion, we strolled out to watch the rising sun. Upon reaching the bank of a small river not very far from the house, we seated ourselves on a large rock and were soon lost in conversation. Millions of bees were buzzing over our heads and at our feet gathering the sweets of “many a flower.”

Thrice had the king-fisher thrown himself headlong from a pendent bough into the stream, and re-ascended uttering his continual guttural twitter before we saw

——the powerful king of day

Rejoicing in the east.

But now rising in glorious majesty he ascended the sky flaming, while every bush, and blade of grass, and flower drooped “glittering with morning dew,” and exhaling balmy odors on the scented air. Who would sleep at such an hour as this “longer than nature craves,” and lose the most delightful portion of the day?

At twelve the company assembled, intending to have dancing before dinner, and I am certain that if there ever was a pair of beings, since the fall of our common parents, that resembled those parents

while yet sinless more than any other, that pair was Leonora and St. Clare. His friend, who is a very handsome and accomplished young man, engaged my hand for the dance on our morning's ramble, and animated by his example I exerted every power I possessed to perform my part well—I never seemed to myself to dance with such ease. At times the music would rise to a grand swell, and I almost imagined myself treading on the very air, so exhilarating is the effect of harmony on the soul.

The dance over, we were led to a splendid collation of every dainty and delicacy, over which Leonora presided with an ease and elegance that were admired by all. After dinner we repaired to the parlor, where dancing was re-commenced by all who chose it. As for me I greatly preferred sitting, being quite tired with the exercises of the morning, and my partner also seated himself by me, saying, that “to converse with one like myself who could charm at first sight, was far preferable to dancing with anybody else.” You may imagine how I felt at this speech, not knowing whether he intended to flatter my vanity, of which, God knows, I have enough, or really thought himself pleased with my appearance. I answered him by observing that “compliments and flattery were unfashionable in the country, and that if a young gentleman wished to gain the esteem of a country lass, his safest course to pursue would be to say as few silly things, and much common sense as possible.” I had barely finished this sentence, to which he replied by a very low bow, when I felt the blood dye my cheeks of a crimson hue, and soon after, complaining of the headache, I retired, nor made my appearance again until next morning when I believed him gone.

What do you think of my conduct? Must it not appear in a very unpromising light to a stranger as he is? one too whom I confess I should like to please, for he seems truly refined, and his remarks carry with them a degree of penetration not at all common among young gentlemen of the present age. Do not, I entreat you, however, take up the idea that I love this stranger, for I candidly assure you that I do *not*. My wish to please him is a common one, for where is there a sensible and sensitive mind that wishes not to be esteemed by the good and wise? Besides, Pauline, I am a dependant on the charity of one who is to me a stranger in blood, and he, they say, is rich, nay, *very wealthy*. Would there be wisdom in loving when there is no hope of a return?—it would be folly, it would be madness. No, I may admire his manners, I may respect his accomplishments, I may esteem his character, but I shall never, I trust, be so careless of my future happiness as to devote my heart to one

who cannot but regard, as an inferior being, a poor orphan like you .

FANNY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME,

Lindsay Farm, June 29th, 18—.

DEAR PAULINE—

I am still at Lindsay Farm, and in his society. I seldom pass a day without a ramble to the little river with him for a companion. Your advice "to catch him if I can," I regard as you intended it merely as a raillery, for I know that it would inflict a pang on Pauline to know that Fanny had stooped to deception. No, I will maintain, if I can, the character which has already gained his esteem; but I would die rather than betray him to unhappiness. But why do I speak of improbabilities? before another month he may be far away among his friends, and I shall perhaps be forgotten—or if remembered at all, only as a simple country girl unworthy of a second thought. Be that as it may, he will ever be kindly remembered by Fanny.

I have frequently noticed him sitting gloomily alone as if in solemn thought—and sometimes he betrays this inclination when with his friends. Yesterday we had strolled down to the rock on the river bank, and seeing him abstracted I inquired if he were unwell? "No," said he, "I was thinking of the fickleness and uncertainty of all earthly things. Even man, the very noblest of God's works, is subject to change, and the heart that is true to-day may before to-morrow become estranged." "And is not our sex included in your remark?" I asked him with a smile. "I intended my remark for *all* mankind," said he, "for few—yes, very few of your sex but may be led away by appearances, and he that can dazzle the eyes of beauty with the glitter of wealth, even though he be imbecile or base, will generally triumph over virtue if it be the companion of poverty." "You speak as if from experience," said I, gaily, "surely you who seem to disapprove such a course so much have never gained the heart of any poor damsel of our sex, and then left her to 'pine in thought?'" "No," said he, bitterly, "but listen, Miss Velvin, I will tell you a tale which will justify that opinion of your sex that I just advanced, and which I confess seems harsh and tending to misogyny." Then stopping suddenly, he said, "not now, Fanny, not now—but at some future period, and it cannot be distant, for I leave Clareville in a few days, you shall know all." It was the first time he had ever spoken to me by any other name than "Miss Velvin," and oh, Pauline! he did look so much distressed, and at the same time so kindly on me, that (shall I own it?) I almost wished myself rich and great for his sake. We returned shortly after to the house, where we found Leonora and Robert

St. Clare awaiting us with joy sparkling in their eyes, which did not seem the less exquisite from a blush that was reveling in her countenance, and for which I did not have to extend my imagination very far to account. At night I sat down and wrote thus, for when I have resolved to wait till I know more before I send this. I desire yet dread to hear the story to which he alluded, for I begin now to think that by some mysterious power our destinies are connected, and that on his weal or woe will ever depend the happiness of your Fanny.

It is time I should finish this letter, for three days have already passed since it was begun.

Leonora and Robert had gone on a pleasure excursion up the river in the little boat that ever lays moored at the shore, and we were alone—no, not entirely alone—for besides my dog that is always with me during a ramble, many busy and anxious thoughts were chasing each other in my mind—for a wonderful agent, whose "name and nature" I know not, intimated to my feelings that words were to be shortly spoken which would affect my future destiny—nay, I believed that my fate was to be fixed eternally by the occurrences of that day.

At last he spoke—and oh, Pauline! if you could have seen him, been near him, and heard him, you would have found it impossible not to sympathize with, pity, and love him. "Miss Velvin," said he, placing himself on a stone before me, that was overgrown with the moss of many summers, "Miss Velvin will pardon my taking the present opportunity of fulfilling a design of which I informed her a few days ago, when she learns my reasons for so doing, one of which is the shortness of time I have for the relation, for I quit Clareville to-morrow." I felt my heart beat violently as he paused, but saying, that "I could never blame any one for performing a promise." I sat down again, for we had both inadvertently risen, he continued, "I am a native of this county, though my extreme youth at the time of my removal to the city has left me no recollection of any object hereabouts, with many of which, however, I was doubtless once familiar. My school-boy days passed after the ordinary fashion, and at twenty I had completed college life, and was admitted to the bar. My clients were few, and no case of moment offered itself for the display of talent, if I had possessed any. Wearied at length, and disappointed in my hopes of eminence in my profession, I was fast growing misanthropic, and had almost learned to hate all the world, except one fair girl with whom I had ever since my return from college associated. Oh! Fanny, if you could have seen her in all her loveliness, and heard the musical voice, that was ever more animated at my approach, you would

not think it strange that I should love that sweet creature. But I have skipped a part of my story.

"I said that I had almost taught myself to despise all mankind—when I was entrusted with a case of great difficulty. I immediately set my mind to the task, and although some of the most sagacious men at the bar were my opponents. I had the good luck to gain for my employers the cause which he was certain would be lost. My fame was greatly enhanced by my success, and business was never after wanting. Having been employed on a very important case, I found it necessary to make a visit to one of the western counties, and after promising her who was to be my wife that my stay should be short, and my heart true, and receiving a promise of constancy from her, I set out. I passed over many a 'lovely hill and valley,' and at length found myself at the Natural Bridge in the county of Rockbridge. The grandeur of this wonder of nature, the picturesque scenery of the country around, and everything connected with this great curiosity induced me to spend a few days at this delightful place. And here let me remark *en passant*, I became acquainted with Robert St. Clare; and many a dark and noisome cave did we explore in the vicinity, for he as well as I was a stranger. At the bridge too we saw and secured a chip of the celebrated stump, which growing out of a cleft of the rock overhangs the 'dread abyss,' and which is celebrated for being the spot chosen by a young lady once to exhibit her moral courage, by placing her heel upon it and whirling around. Her lover, it is said, was with her. Oh! Miss Velvin, if she had fallen and been dashed to atoms, would not her blood have been on his head who had not withheld her from the experiment? Having cut our names on the rock that supports the bridge as high as we could climb, and under those of many eminent men who have visited the place, we parted, he to continue his route to this place, and I to pursue mine westward: we parted not, however, without mutual promises to visit each other on my return, which I expected would be in about three months. But owing to circumstances which I could not foresee, I found it necessary to extend my journey to the state of Mississippi, and had just fulfilled to my entire satisfaction the object of my expedition, when I was seized with the yellow fever that is often so very destructive in the south, and from which it was believed that I should never recover. Thus prevented from writing to any one by the delirium with which I continually struggled, is it any matter for wonder that she should think me unfaithful? Be that as it may, on my return I flew to her, and what was my misery on arriving in the parlor (for my impa-

tience did not permit me to be announced) to find her in the arms of a stranger!

"All were embarrassed—but apologizing for my abrupt entrance, I left the house immediately. I employed myself from that time with the pursuits of my profession, and wealth soon became mine—and with it fame—but I was not happy. It is true I had learnt to despise the woman who had deceived me for the sake of money, (for Barton was rich.) But oh, Fanny! the heart must have an idol—it cannot beat with joy if it beat alone.

"But a heavier blow was now to fall on me, beneath the weight of which I had almost perished. My father, (my mother died when I was young) but my father, I say, on his way to a northern city was dashed against a stone by the overturning of a car, and I was alone, 'he had no child but me.' I excluded myself from every human eye except my menials, and tried to forget that I was even in existence. How long I might have lived thus I cannot tell—but on the announcement of my solitary dinner one day, the servant handed me a card, on which was written the name of Robert St. Clare, his hotel, &c. This awakened in my mind a second existence, and I sent him an invitation to tea, which he accepted. Grief is a nourisher of affection, and the desolate heart will seize eagerly as a friend one who sympathizes with its misfortunes, and soon cherish that friend as an idol.

"Soon after I came with him here, and in the society of his lovely friend and her parents tried to forget my sorrows. I recovered my serenity of mind gradually, and at your arrival was cheerful—but hear me, Fanny, for my tale is not yet finished," and he took my hand which I could not withdraw, "although at your arrival I was cheerful, since that event I have been almost happy—and if anything could render me so indeed, it would be the privilege of devoting my future life to the promotion of the happiness of her, who of all the world I love best—the happiness of Fanny Velvin."

I suffered him to retain my hand as I gently returned the pressure of his own—and looking out on the water the little boat containing our friends had just arrived in sight, and we returned home—they happy and I!

My dear old grandmother will come in a few days, and if you would come, Pauline, your presence would add greatly to the happiness of all. The two weddings are to take place here at the same time, and though I am aware that we all run a great risk in marrying, I feel sure that I could not entrust my happiness to the keeping of any nobler heart than animates the breast of Richard Flemming. Adieu,

FANNY.

FROM PAULINE TO FANNY,

D——h, July 9th, 18—.

DEAREST FANNY—

Your letter of June twenty-ninth came to hand, and I sit down to answer it now, hoping that after reading it you will pardon the sins of the writer in pity for her distress. How base and despicable shall I render myself in your esteem by the confessions which I am about to make! But it is due to you, Fanny, (friend I may not call you, for I cannot claim friendship from the virtuous) but if Pauline has been avaricious, she will not be deceptive. Did Richard Flemming tell you the name of her who betrayed him? No, I am sure he did not. *Fanny it was I*—and yet I adored him—why then, you will say, did I wrong him? Oh, Fanny! it has never been your lot to have parents, and in that you think yourself unblest, but *mine* have been my ruin. It was at their request that I slighted him on his return from the south, it was at their request that I returned his letters, unopened, while he was absent, for I received two, though he did not mention it, I suppose, to you, and, worst of all, it was at their solicitation that I became the most unhappy woman on earth, by becoming the wife of Joseph Barton. Start not, Fanny, I repeat it, I am his wife, though neglected and despised by him. But let me not speak of my own wretchedness any more, although the burden of grief becomes lighter by being made known to one who will sympathize with the victim, as I know that Fanny will with her unhappy friend of former times. Before I conclude let me do justice to the character of Richard Flemming, though he did not justice to mine, for my conduct to him was a thousand times more hateful than he represented it. Fanny, I have seen and conversed with many men who were ornaments to their friends, and redeemers of the characters of their sex—but never, no, never have I known one who was not excelled in goodness, and every quality that is estimable in man, by Richard Flemming.

Oh! that I were not compelled to subscribe myself

PAULINE BARTON.

FANNY TO PAULINE,

Lindsay Farm, July 31st, 18—.

DEAR PAULINE—

I am as happy as I could wish to be when I know that you are miserable. But since it is impossible to re-call the past, ought we not to improve the future by submitting, calmly, to our misfortunes, and since we cannot be happy ourselves, to promote as far as we can the happiness of others? Be assured, my dear *friend*, (for still must you call me so if you love me) that I share your griefs, and let me claim from you a like participation of my joys. My grandmother came

as we expected, and though she seemed fatigued, she did not appear to be sick. The kiss with which she greeted me, however, was enough to convince me that she was laboring with a violent fever, for it burns on my forehead like a spark. My fears were not without cause, and for three days after her arrival here she was unconscious—on the fourth the fever abated, *and she recovered*. Oh, how my heart bounded with delight when she came into the parlor for the first time after her illness. She came unexpectedly—we were sitting around a low work-stool engaged in some lace-work, while Robert read to us from a magazine. On her entrance we started up, and Leonora presented Robert. The introduction was scarcely over when my aged friend's pale face took a paler hue, and muttering to herself as I had seen her do often before, she was sinking to the floor when Robert and I caught her in our arms and bore her to a couch. He would have left the room, but she detained him, and looking in his face, asked eagerly, "if *he* were to become *my* husband?" You may be certain I felt a blush of crimson stain my cheeks, but simply pointed to Leonora, whose cheeks were now redder than mine, when exclaiming, "thank God," my grandmother burst into tears. This strange conduct greatly surprised us all, and but for what she said directly after, Robert might have hated always one who I now know loves him as well as her life.

"Listen," said she, "for it is now necessary that I should confess my sin to those whose parents I have injured, and oh, shade of my lost and lamented Maria, hover over these two children," pointing to myself and Robert, "and protect them from harm as I protected not thee. I was rich and mistress of my fortune, for my husband did not live three years after our marriage—we had one child, and she never saw her father, for they had laid him deep in the earth before my daughter was born. She grew in beauty as she grew in size, and at fourteen had suitors from among the wealthiest in the land. Among these was a young man of excellent morals and education, who had also a large fortune. On an alliance with him I had set my heart, but when I told Maria my wishes what was my vexation to hear that she already loved another. 'It is true, mother,' she said, 'Ferdinand is not rich—but his fortune is ample, and though I esteem Mr. St. Clare, I can never withdraw my affections from the object on which they are now placed.' And now listen, my much injured children, and hate me if you can, for I deserve it. I formed a scheme, which though it succeeded, has cost me more misery than every other act of my life together. I said nothing of my purpose to St. Clare, for I knew his character

too well to expect his connivance. I sent for the lawyer who had ever done my bidding, and placing a hundred dollar bill on a table before him, asked him if he could counterfeit Ferdinand Flemming's handwriting? he smiled and said, 'he could *have* it done.' I took a letter which I had composed for the purpose, and giving it to him with the money, he disappeared. I shall never forget the words of that fatal note—they were precisely as follows:

"Dear Maria—Though my love is still unchanged, yet not being rich, I cannot consent to bring poverty on one who may aspire to a higher destiny than can ever befall the wife of Ferdinand Flemming, adieu."

"On the next day it came by a servant, who went away as soon as he had delivered it. Maria broke the seal, and a slight paleness overspread her cheek, which was succeeded by as deep a crimson—she folded the note again and laid it on a living coal, where it soon burned to cinders. How little did I think it to be an emblem of what her own heart was soon to become! 'Mother,' said she, calmly, next morning, 'I have determined to gratify your wishes, and shall this day engage my hand to Mr. St. Clare.' A single throb of conscience thrilled through my bosom, and I was myself again.

"Flemming was denied *once* after, by the being who loved him more than all the world else, (he came only once) and in a few weeks I saw my devoted child led to the altar by one who was equally deceived as she. They lived well together, for they were both good, and perhaps they might have lived long if it had never been known by what means the change was produced in Maria's sentiments—but by some mysterious fate it happened that the very original from which the lawyer had copied the letter to Maria, fell into the hands of one of her female friends, whose blind love induced her to show the note to my child, and in a few weeks they placed the unhappy daughter of a sinful mother in the cold grave,

while that mother was still suffered by divine and incomprehensible will to continue her existence.

"Mr. St. Clare never discovered the secret, and placing under my charge his infant daughter, kept with himself the son of my poor Maria, and departed to a distant land. For awhile I received letters stating his success in business, for he had engaged in a mercantile establishment, to forget his loss, and he always spoke of the good health and sprightly mind of his 'orphan boy'—but at length these came not, and for years I have not heard from him. I removed hither, and intending to give Fanny my estate, I gave her likewise my family name. Fanny, behold in me your grandmother, and in Robert St. Clare you see a brother."

My brother embraced me, and oh! Pauline, if ever I were happy, it was when I first felt the warm and fervent kiss of a brother's fondest love.

But my cup of happiness was to be made yet more full, even to overflowing—for when Richard Flemming came an hour after, he informed us that he was the son of the very Ferdinand, who had been so dearly loved by my poor mother. Robert said that our father, at his death, told him he had a sister, and that among his papers he would find my address—but while he was paying the last sad duties to our parent's remains, a fire broke out in the forsaken house, and consumed everything. Mysterious fate! by what hidden means were drawn together two who were so widely disunited, and I, the daughter, am now the wife of Richard Flemming, the son. Yes, Pauline, I am his wife, and that happiness which was denied our parents seems to have been reserved for us. And my brother too is happy in the love and possession of the very woman, whom of all the world I would have chosen for his wife.

May the eye of God watch over and protect you is the prayer of her who for the first time in her life subscribes herself FANNY FLEMMING.

THE BOOK CLOSET.

BY EMILY HERRMANN.

Thou, little closet, tell'st what's worth the knowing,
Thro' thee, all pleasant love is mine;
Thou givest me light, when mist is thickly growing,
And leadest me where Truth doth shine.
Thou pointest to the victor's palm,
And showest me, wherefore I am.
Swiftly in legends, quaint and olden,
I hie with thee, o'er land and sea;

View kingdoms spreading, among glories golden,
Falling, and crumbling, soon no more to be.
Thou leadest to the hidden haunts of Nature,
And showest things most wonderful;
Where seemed but dust, I see a living creature
That knows and keeps it Maker's rule.
From motes, that eye can scarce behold,
We soar to Heaven where spheres are rolled.

THE FAREWELL SUPPER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

BY E. R. SMITH.

IN a pleasant valley, not far from the foot of a lofty chain of mountains, stood a goodly manor, generally known as the Forest Lodge, and so called from its solitary position on the skirts of a great forest, which descending from the mountain, stretches far down into both sides of the valley.

Some time ago this Forest Lodge belonged to a worthy man whose name was Arnold. He had lived here for many years with his wife and a little troop of good and happy children. All so thrived and prospered under his hands, that one might almost have fancied this little corner of the world some carefully preserved remnant of our lost paradise. Nor did Arnold form a higher wish than to retain these blessings as they were.

But heaven decreed it otherwise. War came upon the land. Times went hard with poor Arnold. His fields were wasted. His flocks were carried off. His house was plundered.

However, peace was soon proclaimed, and Arnold thought—

“What God doth will,
Can work no ill.”

So he raised a considerable sum upon his lands, and set about repairing his losses as he best might. But the sunshine was of short duration. Again the war broke out, and again poor Arnold lost all; and he was now, with the exception of a small sum that he had borrowed, a completely ruined man.

His unrelenting creditor, to whom he could no longer pay his interest, prepared to drive him from his house and lands; and it was with a heavy heart that he saw the day approach on which he must say farewell forever to his beloved paradise, and turn his back upon his happy home.

Arnold, however, was a stout-hearted man, and would not allow himself to be wholly cast down by any misfortune which he felt he had not brought upon himself. And so once more saying—

“What God doth will,
Can work no ill,”

he looked steadily and with full trust in God, both for himself and those he loved, to the future now before him.

On the day but one before their departure he entered with a cheerful countenance the room in

the corner of which sat his wife, silently weeping, with their youngest child upon her lap, and said to her—“Elsbeth, I have done with grieving. We will have one day’s enjoyment before we leave our home. I will not fly from it in the silence and darkness of night, as if I were a criminal. Rouse thyself, dear wife, and bestir thyself to-morrow. Let us have a fitting farewell feast. We will give all we have, and leave an empty house behind us.”

“How canst thou jest at such a time?” said Elsbeth, gravely, “and with thy poor children before thy eyes.” And as she spoke, the wife cast a look through the window into the court, where the children were playing.

“Jest? not I, for worlds. Wife! ’tis downright earnest. To-morrow I will give a farewell feast,” and walking to the window and looking at the children—“there is a time for all things,” continued Arnold. “A man must not let either joy or sorrow gain the mastery over him. As for these darlings we need not fear. Have they not learned from us to pray and to work? Here, Willibald!—Anna!”

“Coming, father,” answered Willibald, laying by the knife with which he was manufacturing a cross-bow for his younger brother; and Anna’s voice said also, “coming, dearest father.”

In came the pretty boy and girl, and Arnold, seating himself in his arm-chair, and drawing both the children toward him, kissed them. He then gave them his orders. They were to get ready to go to Reimerschau, and there to invite his old friends, the Bailiff and the Head Forester, with their wives and children, for the following evening to a farewell feast. He would send his servant Gottwalt, the only one still left, down to the village on a like errand to his cousins.

“But wilt thou send the children through the wood to-day, and all alone?” said Elsbeth, anxiously.

“Why not? It is not the first time. They will be there in an hour. The sun is still high, and they can easily be back before it sets.”

“To-morrow will be quarter-day,” said Elsbeth. “At this season it is never quite lucky in the wood.”

“The good people who live in the wood have always been neighborly to us,” said he, smiling. “They will not harm the children.”

Wilibald and Anna, who had skipped merrily out of the room, the one to seek his stick and hunting pouch, the other her little basket, were soon at their mother's side, ready for the journey. Elsbeth furnished the pouch and basket with bread—shaking her head all the while. She also put up two handkerchiefs, to tie about them in the cool evening air. Arnold and she took the two as far as the court-yard gate, and stood looking after them as they trotted along the foot-path through the meadow, until they reached the shadow of the wood. Soon after they disappeared amongst the trees.

It was cool and delightful in the wood. Wilibald and Anna enjoyed its green shades and the lofty arches overhead of the old beech trees, and the round golden spots of light which flickered through the boughs upon the mossy turf. The birds were singing—old woodpecker was sharply at work with his little axe. Ever and anon there was a rustling in the branches, which seemed almost like voices, had they understood the language. All was pleasant, but solitary—very solitary.

On they went cheerfully—loitering, but not much, and hardly perceiving how deep they were in the wood, which showed no signs of coming to an end. So far from this, the trees grew thicker and closer on the pathway, as they went on—the shades darker. Wilibald, too, remarked that the sun was already low; Anna, who had been silent for a while, suggested that they must have mistaken their way, which her brother said should have gone far to the left of the high mountain. So back they must needs turn—quite sure that the right road could not be far off. Somehow it was not to be found for the turning. With every step that they took the path became more and more rugged, and the look of the wood wilder and stranger. They had got into some part of it where neither had ever been before.

They stopped short, rather frightened at this discovery; but Wilibald, who had his wits about him, bethought him of climbing one of the high fir-trees, in the hope of finding from the top whereabouts the right path was. It was in vain. On every side was wood and wood, and wood without end. Something like a high rock, however, was seen a little to the left; from the top of that the view might be better. So the boy let himself down from the tree, and the two went in that direction.

They were soon before the rock. But they now for the first time perceived that betwixt them and it flowed a wild mountain stream, rushing and foaming over great blocks of stone. The two children ran up and down along the bank, seeking some spot where they might get across. But in vain—the water was too rough

and rapid—rushing and foaming, and the great blocks of stone too far asunder. It was in vain. They were only more and more bewildered.

They could no longer now precisely tell by which path they had come thither. This was worse and worse, and they stood in dismay by the side of the rushing and foaming brook.

"What will become of us?" said Wilibald, in a tremulous voice, as he looked sorrowfully at his sister, with almost tears in his eyes. But Anna stroked his cheeks, and said, "cheer up, Wilibald. Mother says that we are at all times in God's hand. He will not let us be lost in this desert, wild and terrible as it looks. Let us try to keep along the water's edge. It must lead us somewhere amongst human beings."

She stopped short, for, while she was yet speaking, there sounded distinctly, from the opposite side of the stream, "*Pst! Pst!*" They looked here, they looked there. Not a human being was to be seen. So they went a step or two down the stream. "*Pst! Pst!*" was heard again, this time louder and more distinct. And again they stopped, and again they looked up and down and across the water. At length, on the other side, what should be seen but a little dwarf, peering through a cleft in the great rock, something like a window; who nodded, and made signs to them to come across. As this could not be managed by the children, it seemed as if he must come to them. So he came out from his nook, down to the side of the stream—cleared it with a few nimble springs, and stood before them, nodding familiarly.

Wilibald could hardly help laughing, so odd a figure was this mannikin. He was about three feet in height, one half of which was taken up by his big head. This was matched with a pair of huge fists; but head and fists seemed to have no concern with the rest of the body. One could not imagine how those two meagre bandy-legs of his contrived to bear such a weight. He had a pair of glaring round eyes and a bright red lump of a nose, studded with carbuncles, reminding the girl of the garnets in her mother's necklace. The dwarf was dressed in a mountaineer's grey frock, and carried a sharp hammer in his hand.

"Well, my children," cried he, with a shrill voice, "whence do ye come? Whither do ye go? What do you seek?"

Wilibald told him whence they had been going, and what their errand was; also, how they had got lost in the wood.

The dwarf laughed, and wagged his great head from shoulder to shoulder. "To Reimersshau you cannot go to-day. It does not suit me:—and I forbid you. But your father shall not want for guests. I will myself wait upon him, to-morrow evening."

So saying, he walked toward the underwood, making a sign to the children to follow him. In a few steps they found themselves upon a narrow footpath. He bade them keep this path, and it would lead them safely and directly to their home.

"But," added the dwarf, "as you value your own and your father's lives, say not a word to him of what you have seen; but merely say—'Father, the guests have been invited.'"

His great eyes flashed so strangely as he spoke, and his voice thundered so imperiously, that Wilibald and Anna dared not venture a word, and took at once the path he pointed out to them, not daring to look behind them. When at last they turned, the dwarf was not to be seen.

While they were still debating who and what this creature could be, and whether they should obey his orders, they heard on their right again the sound of water, but less tumultuous than before; and, emerging from the trees, they saw lying at their feet a lake. It was inclosed on three sides with high, high mountains, with trees upon their tops gilded with the last rays of the sun. The shores of the lake were already lying in twilight, and mists were rising from the hollows, but the blue heaven was still clearly reflected in the dark mirror.

Anna seized Wilibald's arm, and whispered to him, "this surely must be the mountain lake of which my father has so often told us." But Wilibald stopped her with a "look!" for he saw and pointed out to Anna a woman seated upon the green grass down by the shore. "Let us go down!" he said. "Perhaps she can inform us how far it is from this to Reimerschau, and which is the way thither."

Down they ran, but what was their surprise, as they drew nearer, to find no peasant-girl (as they had supposed) but a beautiful, stately lady, seated on the grass, and combing her long fair hair with a gold and mother-of-pearl comb.

"Whence do ye come? Whither do ye go? What do ye here, ye lovely children?" began the lady, as they both stood abashed before her. Wilibald told her where they had been going, what their errand was, and modestly put forward his request.

The lady shook her head. "To Reimerschau," said she, "you cannot get to day. It does not suit me, and I forbid you. But your father shall not want for guests; I will myself wait on him to-morrow evening." She then pointed out to them the mountain pass through which their road led, and desired them to seek their home without delay. "But," added the lady, "as you value your own and your father's lives, say not one word to him of what you have seen, but merely say—'father, the guests have been invited.'"

She then made a sign to them to go, and Wilibald and Anna bowed politely to her and went.

"All this is very strange," said Wilibald, as they reached the pass and looked once more behind them toward the lady, who was not to be seen. "Who are these stern people that order us in this way?—and why are we not to go to Reimerschau?"

"So far as to-day is concerned, they are right enough," said Anna; for see, it is already nearly dark. It will be better to go there the first thing to-morrow morning. But why are we not to tell our father?"

"There is a light!" cried Wilibald. "Now we shall meet with reasonable folks, who will speak sense to us."

And as she spoke, a light did glimmer through the trees; first one—and then a second—and more and more as they went further and further. "We must be coming to a great village," said Anna.

They stepped cheerily on; the pass grew wider, and at length they stood upon an open plain. Far or near, however, no village, not so much as one house, was to be seen; only on one side in a field a number of small blue flames, which flickered here and there, and crossed each other, and leaped and danced merrily.

"These are will-o'-the-wisps," whispered Wilibald. "We must take careful note of the right road that they may not mislead us."

Whilst he spoke, one of the little flames separated itself from the others, and capered—*hush! hush!*—over the field and close to them. The nearer it came, the more it extended itself, and kept growing larger, though at the same time more invisible, until at length it stood right before them on the road; and they were then aware that it was neither a little flame nor a "will-o'-the-wisp, but a man of small stature and pale countenance, so thin and emaciated withal, that it appeared as if the wind, which was blowing pretty sharply over the common, would every moment take him off his legs. He kept fidgetting and wavering to and fro before the children, never once, however, lifting his feet from the ground.

With a low and delicate voice he immediately commenced the old story, "Whence come ye? Whither do ye go? What want ye here?"

Wilibald could not help laughing at this thin, restless, little creature; but gave, nevertheless, due heed to his questions.

"Stuff! stuff!" he hissed as he jumped here and there. "Stuff! with your Reimerschau! You will neither reach it to-day, nor yet to-morrow. It does not suit me; and I forbid you. But that your father may not want for guests, I will myself wait on him to-morrow evening."

"I thought as much," murmured Willibald. "I knew what was coming."

"But," he continued, and raised his long, white fore-finger threateningly, as you value your own and your father's lives, breathe not a word of this to him, but merely say—'father, the guests have been invited.' " Thereupon he sprang suddenly over the fence by the side of the road, and ran swiftly along with the children, who followed the pathway, telling them he would bear them company as far as the next willow.

As they reached the willow, he cried out, "ho there, good neighbor! How goes it? Will you join the party to-morrow evening? We shall have rare sport, I fancy."

"Good! good! I go," answered a hoarse bass voice, which appeared to the children to proceed from the trunk of the willow which they were approaching. As they drew nearer, however, the tree began to move, and they now perceived that it was yet another man, strong and thick set, who stood before them, with a mantle round his shoulders and a crown upon his head.

"Whence come ye? Whither go ye? What want ye here?" he instantly called out to the children.

Willibald for the fourth time told his story, not, however, without some hesitation, for the bass voice had somewhat frightened him. When he had ended, it again growled out, "no Reimerschau, neither to-day nor to-morrow; I won't have it—will be your guest myself. Keep counsel—twist your neck off else. Quick—march!"

Willibald and Anna did not give him occasion to repeat his orders, but set off at once, full speed, glancing back now and then to see if the terrible quartermaster was at their heels or not.

"Now, this is growing too ridiculous," said Willibald, as he at length slackened his pace. "There are queer people here amongst these hills. Who could that surly fellow be?"

"Hush! do keep quiet, now," said Anna. "I wish we were at home. The night is falling round us fast. What will become of us if we have yet to pass through that dark wood?"

Their way nevertheless lay right through the wood; but ere they reached it, another road from the side intersected the one they were on, and appeared to lead on the left to the outskirts of the forest. What would they not have given for some one to advise them which of the two to take?

They stood by the cross-road, deliberating, when hark! a noise rang through the wood:—cries of hounds, halloos, sounds of horses, first in the distance, and then nearer and nearer; and now close by them, and right and left, and the noise burst through the brushwood and rang with frightful clatter by. They could neither see or

distinguish anything but a confused multitude of grey shadows sweeping rapidly past.

After these, however, came a rider mounted on a coal black steed, bounding from out of the wood with loud view-halloo. He reared up his black steed before them, and, fixing his eyes upon them, said, "from whence come ye? Whither go ye? What do ye here?" Willibald tried to speak, but the words stuck in his throat, for the rider, in his outlandish dress, with his high cap upon his head, had a strange and unearthly air, and the eyes of the black horse glared in the night like burning coals. But Anna, more collected, gently gave him the information he required.

"Ho! ho! holla!" he cried, when she had finished, "take advice, and think no more of Heimerschau; nor yet to-morrow. It does not suit me. But that your father may not want for guests, I will myself to-morrow wait on him. Huzza! huzza!"

He spurred his charger on, but soon drew in and called to them, "have a care, as you love your own and your father's lives, tell no tales;" and with these words he dashed over the turf to join the wild hunt, which was still visible in the distance.

They looked after him for some time. At length Willibald broke the silence; "why could you not have asked the right way to the Forest Lodge?"

"He did not look like one who would have answered me," said Anna. "Let us then, in God's name, go straight forward; it will be our best course;" and so without further deliberation, they entered the wood in God's name.

But they found themselves sadly puzzled by the darkness, and the farther they advanced into the wood the worse it became. Presently they lost the path altogether, ran against the trees in all directions, and knew not where to turn. At this moment of their greatest need they suddenly perceived a glimmering light quivering among the trunks of some old trees, which now disappeared, and then again was visible.

Willibald leaped high for joy, embraced his sister, and began with all his might and main to shout and cry. He was immediately answered by a voice: and then and there came a great light round the corner of the rock, which glided swiftly toward them. At first, Willibald and Anna took it for a man with a great lantern. Then they thought it was a burning torch. At length, as it drew nearer toward them, they saw that it assumed the form of a fat man, and that he shone all over like a glow-worm, except his great broad face, which, however, was of such a deep red color that it looked almost as if it was on fire. "Good evening; good evening, my little ones," called out this jovial fellow. "Whence come ye? Whither go ye? What want ye here?"

Willibald again told his tale, and entreated for a little light, that they might find their way through this darkness to their own house.

"Most willingly, most willingly, my children," said the fat glow-worm. "We shall soon be there; but give up this nonsensical expedition to Reimersshau. It does not suit me, nor will you accomplish it to-morrow a bit better than to-day. But that your father may not want for guests, I will myself to-morrow evening wait on him."

He had during this speech kept unceasingly and briskly moving onward, and though the two children were at first rather frightened by his extraordinary appearance, his friendly and confiding manner soon set them at their ease, and they followed him fearlessly and cheerfully, especially when they heard that they were now not far from home.

And in truth, they were hardly a hundred steps further, than they fairly emerged from the wood, and found themselves in an open plain, which, with extreme delight, they recognized as the meadow behind their own house.

"Now, my children," said their companion, "you have no further need of me. Good night! but let me warn you, as you value your own and your father's lives, not a syllable of what has happened. Merely say, 'father, the guests have all been invited.'"

He turned, and with a few good springs, disappeared into the wood.

Willibald and Anna now hastened home, but agreed upon the way to be silent, at least for the present, on the subject of their adventures; for Anna, in particular, thought, however unwillingly she acted thus, that these strange people in the wood were not to be trifled with.

Great was the joy on their arrival at the Forest Lodge. As the night drew on their parents' anxiety about them had been very great; and their father had just lighted the lantern, slung his rifle across his shoulder, and was in the act of setting out to seek for them.

They were now besieged on all sides with questions, "why, and where they had staid out so long? and what the Chief Ranger and the Bailiff had said?" But Anna took her father by the hand, and, in a low voice, begged that he would not question her to-night, as she could not now answer him. In due time he would learn all.

Arnold looked wonderingly into his daughter's face; but she fixed her eyes so beseechingly on him, that he silently kissed her forehead, and, turning to her mother, said, "the children are very tired, dearest mother, let them now go to bed; they will tell us all to-morrow morning."

On the following morning the good Elsbeth was early at her work, that her farewell feast might do due honor to her guests. Cakes were

to be baked, the few fowl yet left them were to yield up their lives: and Arnold was sent forth, with gun in hand, in quest of game. Thus it chanced that Elsbeth was too busy to ask Willibald and Anna how they had got to Reimersshau, and invited the Bailiff and the Chief Ranger. It caused some trouble, however, that the servant, Gottwalt, was not forthcoming—since, besides the answer from the cousins, he should have brought spices, lemons, and other such matters from the town.

In such turmoil the day went over; and the wood began to throw its deep shadows over the meadow, and the distant mountain-tops to be tinged with a purple hue. The kitchen fire for the last two hours had been burning bravely, and Father Arnold had already been twice to the hill behind the house, anxiously looking for his guests; but no guests came. Night drew on apace. A grey mist covered the distant valley, and the purple on the mountain-tops had changed to a deep red. Elsbeth had three times popped her head in at the door, saying that if the guests did not come soon the roasts would be entirely burnt; but still the guests came not.

It was now quite dark. The maid prepared the table. Arnold ordered the candles to be lighted in order that something might be going on, while Elsbeth, who now began to suspect a mistake, was beginning seriously to question Willibald and his sister, when, all at once, a gentle knocking was heard—tap, tap, tap—at the door. "Come in," cried Arnold, cheerily, and hastened to open the door. There stepped in a little man, with an enormous head, which the children easily recognized in spite of the grand company wig of asbestos with which he had adorned it. Besides this, he now wore a coat of fine brown with great gold buttons, and a glittering waistcoat to match his wig of woven asbestos, buttoned with a double row of precious stones.

The dwarf greeted Arnold and his wife with a friendly "good luck to ye," announced himself as Head Mine Inspector Bergmann, and begged they would excuse his intrusion; having been benighted among the hills, he said the sight of lights had guided him to their dwelling, where he now begged for some hospitality.

Arnold welcomed him heartily, and begged him to take a seat on a bench which occupied one side of the room.

He was hardly seated, when again a gentle knocking—tap, tap, tap—was heard at the door; and when Arnold cried, "come in," and ran to open it, behold! a stately lady entered, covered from head to foot in an ample veil. Willibald and Anna recognized her at the first glance.

She bowed courteously to Arnold and Elsbeth, and introduced herself as a Lady Waterpark.

Her carriage, she said, had met with an accident as she was on her way to the baths in that neighborhood. She hoped they would allow her to remain there until the necessary repairs were completed.

Arnold welcomed her kindly, and on her declining his offer of seeing after the broken carriage, he could only beg her to take a seat on the bench beside the Head Mine Inspector. She had hardly sat down, when again there came a very gentle knocking—tap, tap, tap—at the door. Arnold called, “come in,” and went in some surprise to open it. A spare little man whisked nimbly toward him, jumped backward and forward before him and his wife, twisting himself and making the strangest congees, as he apologized in a feeble voice for his sudden intrusion. “He was Professor Wildfire; and had been benighted whilst botanizing in the neighboring mountains. Might he ask for a little refreshment!—he had still a good way to go.”

Wilibald and Anna recognized this new guest also, although he was now dressed in the most extraordinary holiday attire—a liver-colored coat with silver buttons, a light blue waistcoat, and sulphur-colored trowsers. He had a long stick in one hand; in the other, as well as in his button-hole, an immense nosegay of every kind of marsh plant; and on his head arose a wonderful and complicated toupee, like nothing so much as a pointed flame.

Arnold could not help smiling at this strange figure, but welcomed him and begged him to take his place beside the Lady Waterpark and the Head Mine Inspector, and made a sign to his wife that she should set something before these unexpected guests.

The professor had not seated himself, nor had Frau Elsbeth left the room, when once more they heard a knocking. This time it was a loud and distinct—tap, tap, tap—at the door. Arnold said, “come in,” and proceeded to open the door, slightly shaking his head; when in came a deep, bass “good evening,” and behind it a somewhat uncouth-looking thick-set man in a grey coat, trimmed with a broad gold lace after a by-gone fashion, wearing a rather wild wig with long hair and a small laced three-cocked hat.

The quartermaster, for it was he and no other, greeted Arnold with a condescending nod, announced himself as the unattached General Erl-King, and in a few words gave them to understand that he would be glad to rest here on his journey for the night.

Arnold, in spite of his increasing wonder, gave him a right hearty welcome, and begged him for the present to sit down by the Lady Waterpark and the Head Mine Inspector.

The general walked slowly toward the seat.

Wilibald and Anna retired clear out of his way, and withdrew close to their mother. But hardly had the new guest taken his place, when for the fifth time a knock came—tap, tap, tap—to the door, and when Arnold, half-laughing, half-provoked, cried, “come in,” the door opened, and there walked in a tall man in a green hunting-dress. His hanger was buckled round his waist, his black hair hung wildly round his pale face.

Wilibald and Anna recognized the Wild Hunter of the night before, and crept close behind the stove; but Elsbeth stood petrified with astonishment, her hands folded on her bosom, and her mouth half open.

The hunter spoke sharp and short to Arnold; he was chief master of the wild hunt. There was to be a great chase next day in the mountains. He begged for night-quarters at the Forest Lodge, having appointed his suite to meet him there early the following morning.

Arnold welcomed him, assuring him that his whole house was at his service, and he begged him to take a seat by the General, the Professor, the Lady Waterpark, and the Head Mine Inspector.

For the sixth and last time a knocking was heard—tap, tap, tap—at the door, and before Arnold could call out, “come in,” a fat man pushed himself into the room, puffing and blowing, with a broad fiery-red face. He wore a long great coat of English fashion, bowing most politely, and introduced himself as Counsellor of the Chamber and Commissioner of Lanterns’ Firemen, who, having heard much in praise of Mr. Arnold, had long wished for an opportunity of making his valuable acquaintance.

Arnold thanked him politely, and hoped that he would take a seat near the Chief Master of the Hunt, the General, the Professor, the Lady Waterpark, and the Head Mine Inspector.

He did so; and as their host now beheld these six extraordinary figures seated thus in a long row beside each other, stiff and immovable, (except the professor, who dangled his legs a little) their eyes fixed and turned toward him, the four middle ones pale, almost corpse-like, the face at the right and the nose at the left shining with supernatural carbuncle-brightness, he was struck with a sort of strange and unearthly terror. But there Arnold’s guests were, and so he carefully concealed his feelings.

“Honored lady and worthy gentlemen,” said he, “I am leaving this house and neighborhood to-morrow, and it was my wish to give my farewell feast this evening. Since the guests whom we invited have not arrived, strangely enough: might I beg of you to do us the honor of taking their places, and of partaking of our farewell supper.”

The six figures bowed, one and all, in reply to Arnold's courtesy; and the Head Mine Inspector, in the name of all, said how much they felt themselves honored to be the guests of such a worthy man, all of them hoping, nevertheless, that he would long continue to reside in the neighborhood.

Arnold only replied with a shrug of his shoulders, while Elsbeth, in some trepidation, mingled with housewifely conceit, hastened to the kitchen to order up the supper. When this was served, Arnold seated himself with his family and guests at the table.

The guests spoke little, like persons not well acquainted with each other. They ate still less; indeed, to Elsbeth's annoyance, they hardly touched the food, and only made a pretence of eating. It was not so with the wine. When it came, they made less ceremony, but diligently emptied their glasses, and as Arnold diligently filled them again, matters began to go more briskly. The party grew loquacious, the guests talking partly with their hosts; partly with one another in some quaint unknown language which had a sound more like kissing, blowing, whistling, and smacking, than any real Christian tongue.

Arnold and his wife listened to this gibberish with the greatest astonishment, and the children could no longer restrain themselves from laughing out loud at it. But this was nothing to what began at the end of the feast. Mother Elsbeth then placed upon the table an immense bowl of hot punch, and the steaming glasses clinked together, and brimming bumpers were emptied to the bottom. The strangers drank to the health of the brave host and the amiable hostess that they might long retain possession of the Forest Lodge. They drank, too, to a continuance of neighborly kindness. Then their eyes began to glare and sparkle as the eyes of a cat in the dark do. Then their talk grew more and more lively, and they broke out into loud peals of laughter, and made the most ludicrous gestures and contortions. Frau Elsbeth looked at her husband, and Father Arnold shook his head. Queer company they had in the Lodge—that was past doubt, and every moment it seemed growing queerer—for on the Lady Waterpark calling for a drink, and on Elsbeth delaying a little with the wished-for water, what did the lady do but took up the corner of her veil and squeezed out of it into a glass the clearest water?

Elsbeth saw this, and was terrified; and to cover her confusion seized a pair of snuffers and snuffed a candle out. Whereupon her neighbor, Chamber Counsellor Fireman, quickly, and with the most obliging air, stretched his hand out of his long sleeve and re-lighted the candle with his finger.

This was beyond a joke. A sudden horror of her unknown guests seized upon the pious Frau Elsbeth, who pushed back her seat and stood up. Arnold and the children followed her. The guests, however, did not appear to notice their dismay; at least they took no heed of it, but grew more and more noisy, and made more and more frightful faces and grimaces.

At this moment the clock struck twelve. Up sprang Professor Wildfire, threw a summerset with the greatest agility, and crowed out, "music! music! good people! Music here! We will have a dance!" On this, the Wild Hunter ran to the window, flung it up, and crying, "hallo! hallo!" in hunter's fashion, was answered forthwith by the yelling of hounds and blowing of horns, and the hooting of an old owl or two thoroughly versed in such orchestra work. The other five guests stood up and began to dance merrily, and every minute more merrily—wilder and wilder. The ball seemed to quicken the spirits of the party. The Head Mine Inspector, with a wild shout, flung his wig up to the ceiling, where it stuck upon a nail. Professor Wildfire sprang up and down upon all the benches, tables, and shelves, seeming to grow taller and shorter with the most wonderful elasticity. Counsellor Fireman meanwhile, from time to time, unbuttoned his great coat. Every time he did so a shower of fire and sparks streamed out upon the dancers—a prank which seemed to excite them to dance merrily, and yet more merrily, wilder and wilder.

They began chasing and catching one another round and round the room. One would now unexpectedly seize his own leg, laying about him lustily with it, or fling his own head at his neighbor, catching it up and putting it on again as if it had been a senseless hat. Stools and benches were upset. Glasses, flasks, and plates were swept off from the table. Elsbeth clasped her hands in despair.

"Take the children into the next room," said Arnold. But on this, General Erl-King sprang toward her, crying out, "children leave! These children I take! Children are mine!"—and the children began to scream, and cry, and crept behind their mother. This was not to be endured: for Arnold indignantly walked up to the speaker and complained of this unseemly return for his hospitality. General Erl-King merely answered, "pish! wish! wish!" and was in the ring again.

The mad whirl grew madder and madder, and went round faster and faster—merrily and yet more merrily. The candles were by this time all out; but the Chamber Counsellor had by this time thrown off his great coat, and his fiery form alone lighted the whole scene, scattering around him such showers of fire that Arnold trembled lest his house should be burned. Next the owl

horn-players and trumpeters came down from the window, mixed among the crowd, and it seemed as if the band without would shortly break in, for the cries of the hounds and the blasts of horns came in merrily and more merrily, madder and madder.

Perfectly fruitless were all poor Arnold's attempts to make his wild guests keep order or hear reason. Once he himself was drawn into the whirlpool, and against his will was spun round with the dancers, being pitched to and fro with violence. But he got clear somehow, and thanked God, as panting for breath he escaped into the adjoining room.

There all was terror and dismay. The children shouted and screamed. Frau Elsbeth stood trembling and wringing her hands. The maid knelt by the bed-side, and had thrust her head under the bed-clothes that she might neither see nor hear.

"Oh, if we had but told our father yesterday!" said Wilibald, to his sister, weeping, "then our father would never have let these hideous people into the house to-night."

On this, Anna, who had stood for awhile silent, thinking, it seemed, suddenly crept out of the room. And very soon after, at the moment it seemed, when the noise and terror were at their highest pitch, (so that even Arnold's head grew dizzy, and he hardly knew what he was about) the little girl suddenly appeared at the door of the guest-chamber where the mad revel was raging, and, holding something concealed under her apron, she cried with a loud voice—

"Lift up your eyes!
The sun doth rise!
And now the dance must end!"

As Anna spoke she lifted up her apron, and the great farm-yard cock fluttered out, flew straight to the top of a clothes'-press, shook himself, and with all his might and main began to crow.

There was a sudden dead silence. The guests all stood up and listened.

The cock crowed a second time. Out flew the owls and owlets through the window. The invisible Wild Hunter followed with frightful crash.

The rest of the company ran about in terror and confusion.

The cock crowed a third time. A moment—and it was as if all had been swept and blown away.

Anna stood quite alone in the room, and the moon looked mildly and peacefully through the window down from the cloudless heaven.

Arnold had seen all from the adjoining room, and, springing toward her, kissed and pressed to his heart his wise and stout-hearted little daughter. The others, too, now ventured from their hiding-place. Arnold ordered the candles to be lighted, and when the lights came they all saw with astonishment three great purses standing on the table, with three great labels hanging to them. Upon the first label was: "*As a grateful return for a hospitable reception.*" Upon the second: "*Long may you possess the Forest Lodge.*" Finally, upon the third: "*Continued good neighborhood.*" When the purses were opened, lo! they were full of good old hard dollars. Besides these, the floor was strewn with a quantity of gold pieces, which the Fireman must have scattered there; and upon the tables and cupboards, and wherever Professor Wildfire had capered, lay drifts of bright silver pennies.

You may fancy every one's joy at the discovery: but what was it all to Anna's, when, last of all, she discovered on her own neck a costly necklace of magnificent pearls? She did not herself know how she had come by it, unless it could have been put there by the Lady Waterpark.

And this was the way that Arnold once more became a rich man. He paid his debts, put his household again into the best order; all throve and prospered under his hands, as formerly; and he lived in the Forest Lodge with his family in peace and happiness for many a year.

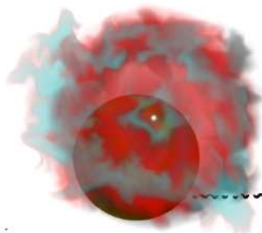
The pearl necklace, however, is still preserved in the family in remembrance of the extraordinary supper. An asbestos wig also remained hanging on the ceiling, where it might be seen a few years since by those that visited the Forest Lodge.

TWILIGHT MELODIES.

THERE is mute eloquence beneath the skies,
A solemn music in the wand'ring brook;
The trees, the flowers—each sequestered nook
Seems bright with beauty, e'en though daylight dies.
For in the sobbing wind a spirit sighs,
So full of adoration, that it grows
Almost to worship, and o'er Nature throws
A holy calm, which God to man supplies.

The melody of silence in the air
Whispers through leafy boughs, while scarce a sound
Disturbs the stillness, which grows more profound.
The soul of man is filled with heartfelt prayer
As the soft twilight deepens into gloom,
While glitt'ring stars shine forth in Heaven's blue
dome.

H. J. V.



MARCH, 1851.

THE SHIPWRECK.

BY CHARLES J. PETERSON.

CHAPTER I.

It was just before the breaking out of the last war with England, that a grand ball took place in the French port of ——. The occasion was the presence of an American man-of-war in the harbor; and the festival was given on board of a line-of-battle ship, one of the few Napoleon had saved from Trafalgar.

The deck of the colossal vessel presented a superb spectacle, on the evening in question. Flags were hung in festoons; naked swords were arrayed in stars; and muskets were piled all around. An admirable band of musicians played national airs, or inspired the dancers and waltzers. Crowds of naval officers, of every grade, distinguished by the politeness of their nation, moved about; while groups of elegantly dressed ladies chatted with these heroes, or enjoyed the dance.

Foremost in that bright array of beauty was an American belle, the lovely and accomplished Florence Harold. Her father, a wealthy Virginia planter, had been in Europe for many years, having resided most of the time in Paris, where his daughter had just completed her education. To the native virtues of an American female, Florence united the graces of the most polished society. On the present occasion she was unquestionably the star of the evening.

Of the many admirers, however, who crowded about her, one appeared to claim her especial attention. When she listened to him, a conscious blush mantled her cheek: when she spoke, in reply, her whole soul went with her words and smile. That they were lovers was evident. But few knew that the handsome American lieutenant, Frank Crawford, was already engaged to the fair Florence, and that the union was to take place on her return to America, an event that was now daily expected. In truth Mr. Harold's presence

at ——, was to take passage in an armed merchantman, which was to sail, in less than a week, for America.

"And so you leave, the day after to-morrow," said Frank Crawford, during a moment's *tete-a-tete* with Florence. "I wish your father could be persuaded to stay, and go with us. The captain has already once offered him a passage, and would urge it, I know, if he did not fear to be considered too pressing. Don't you think Mr. Harold might be persuaded?"

"No," said Florence, smiling, but shaking her head. "On this point he is inexorable. The captain of the merchantman is an old friend, and pa would not disappoint him for the world."

Frank Crawford sighed. He would have given much to have secured Florence's company during the sojourn of his ship at ——, and afterward for the voyage home; but he saw it could not be. Florence heard the sigh, and, in her kind way, sought to comfort her lover.

"Pa says there will be no danger, so you need fear nothing for us. The merchantman is a very fast ship."

"As to that," said Frank, "I have no fears. You'll be safe enough, Florence. But it annoys me, I confess, to find that we are to be parted now, when I had hoped we should make the voyage home together." And he sighed again.

"Pa, too, has old-fashioned notions," said Florence, playfully, "and I, like a dutiful daughter, yield to his better judgment." And laying her hand on Frank's arm, she added, coloring in beautiful confusion; "when it becomes my duty to obey you, Frank, I shall do as you think right. A good daughter makes a good wife, you know."

Such words, so lovingly spoken, were irresistible. Frank inwardly cursed his unlucky stars, but nevertheless could not complain after this. A stoic, much less a lover would have found it

impossible to resist those pleading, dove-like eyes.

Two days after, the brave merchantman, looking as trim almost as a man-of-war, sailed from

CHAPTER II.

It was an awful tempest. The wind shrieked, the waves dashed, the rain poured, the lightnings blazed, and the thunder bellowed on high. Yet the gallant ship, in which the Harolds had taken passage, as yet successfully battled against wind, wave and rain, and defied the wild electric war.

Florence, however, though naturally courageous, was not without alarm; for she saw that her father was somewhat terrified, though he strove to conceal it from her. Once or twice the captain came down into the cabin, to tell them how the storm went on, and even he exhibited visible signs of agitation. Florence had, at first, retired, but as the night deepened, the tempest had increased to such a pitch that she could not sleep, and attiring herself in a white morning wrapper had joined her father, who had remained up. Occasionally Mr. Harold left her to go on deck, for a few minutes. It was after one of these momentary absences that he returned more serious than ever.

"Is the storm worse?" said Florence, anxiously.

"Yes!" replied the parent. "Still, the ship is a stout one, and we have but little to fear."

"Then there is danger," cried Florence. "Oh! pa, tell me all. You would not say as much as you have, unless you thought the peril very great. Speak. I can bear it."

"Prepare for the worst then," said her father, clasping her in his arms, while a tear started to his manly eye. "Unless the gale abates, the ship will not hold out till morning; for every spar is already strained, and a frightful leak has just been discovered."

Florence turned whiter than ashes at these terrible words. Life was dear to her, for youth and love were hers; and death was doubly terrible, because she could not bid Frank farewell. Her first thought was of the long, long years he would wait for her, in the vain hope that she might yet reach America in safety. Her next was how to die. She murmured a prayer to heaven, burying her face on her father's bosom. At last she spoke.

"Clasp me closer, dear father," were her words, "let me feel your arm around me. We will die together. Even the voracious ocean shall not separate us. Ours will be the same grave, blessed thought!"

Mr. Harold's broad breast shook with sobs. He had expected despair, he had feared a girl's

weakness; but he little knew his child; and this heroism, this divine resignation completely overpowered him.

"You teach me how to die, Florence," he said. "God bless you, dearest of martyrs. But hark!"

He started to his feet as he spoke. An awful clap of thunder had burst overhead, almost stunning those who heard it. Simultaneously a squall seemed to have struck the vessel, for she heeled over; while all on deck was confusion, to judge by the loud orders of the captain and the hurrying of feet.

"I must leave you for a moment," said Mr. Harold, placing Florence in a secure position. "I may be of service on deck. If not I will return at once." He rushed up the gangway, as he spoke, encountering a torrent of water that came pouring down.

Minute after minute passed, yet he did not return. The cabin was now half full of water, but Florence was clinging in a secure position, on the upper, or weather-side, and was but little incommoded. The shouts and tramping of feet continued, followed, after an interval, by the stifled noise of axes, as if used in cutting under water. Then there was a sharp crack, and the ship began to right.

But still Mr. Harold did not make his appearance. For about a minute, after the merchantman recovered an even keel, the noise on deck continued; and then came a staggering blow against the ship, as if some unusually gigantic wave had struck it. A cataract of water simultaneously poured down the companion way, till the cabin was waist deep with the briny element. Florence believed that the crisis had come. She expected momentarily to be suffocated in the flood, and closed her eyes in horror.

But, in a few instants, the rush of the descending fluid was over, and Florence, gathering hope, listened to hear what was happening on deck. All was stilled there, as if by enchantment. No human cries, no tramping feet were heard, but only the rush of water and the howling of the wind. Florence listened and listened in vain. The silence, thus continued, was more appalling than all the noises which preceded it. Florence had heard of whole crews being swept overboard sometimes by a single wave, and her heart froze with terror as the thought suggested itself that this had happened now.

Five minutes, ten minutes, a quarter of an hour elapsed, and, at last, unable to endure the suspense, Florence groped her path to the companion way, braving the floods of water in the cabin, and finally struggled to the deck. Here the violence of the wind almost prostrated her. The first object that caught her vision was the

stump of the mizen-mast, which had been broken off close to the deck: it was the nearest thing she saw to which to cling; and, in a moment, she was clasping it with both arms.

She now cast an anxious, affrighted look around. Her worst fears were confirmed. Not a living soul beside herself was on deck. Seamen and officers, friends and father, all had been swept ruthlessly away by that destroying surge, and were, before this, numbered with the dead. A wild shriek burst from Florence, as this horrible truth dawned upon her; she lost consciousness, and sank down.

How long she remained thus was never known. The dash of water in her face finally aroused her. She opened her eyes wearily, almost regretting that she had been re-called to life; and then, struggling to her feet, still clinging to the broken mast, she looked again around.

The waves were pouring over the bulwarks, one wild surge trooping after another, swashing to and fro across the decks, and splashing their cold spray high over her. It was evident that the ship had settled considerably since Florence had left the cabin, and was even now, perhaps, on the point of sinking. In the vain hope of finding help, a hope dictated more by the instinct of self-preservation than by any belief that aid was possible, Florence cast an eager glance over the horizon. But nothing met her eye except the angry billows, tossing their white crests aloft, and the lightning blazing, ziz-zag, across the mid-night sky.

She raised her face to heaven, extending one arm aloft. As she stood there, the wind blowing her disheveled tresses about, and the waves coming over the bulwark, deeper and deeper, every instant, while her form and countenance shone out, for one moment, distinct in the lurid glare, she seemed some fair saint, in the white robes of martyrdom, appealing to the Most High.

"Father in heaven," she cried, "receive my spirit. Shorten the sharp pang of death, and bear me to Thy bosom." And then, as if transported by holy faith, she ejaculated, "oh! grave, where is thy victory." And she fell to the deck again.

The lightning vanished, and gloom shut in the scene. The winds still roared and the waters raged, but that devoted vessel was no more visible in the darkness.

CHAPTER III.

It was a bright and brilliant morning. The heavens were without a cloud; the sun shone dazzlingly on the waters; and a gentle breeze sighed over the waste of the broad Atlantic.

A gallant ship, with the American ensign flying, was speeding swiftly on her homeward way.

"A glorious morning after the tempest," said Frank Crawford, to a brother lieutenant. "I never saw a more terrible storm of its character."

"At times I thought," replied his companion, "that the ship would certainly be struck by lightning."

At this instant their attention was arrested by a cry from a look-out aloft.

"What is it?" said Crawford, who was officer of the deck.

"A wreck, sir," was the answer. "I can see a stump of a mast. But the hull lies very low, sir, as if the craft was water-logged."

"Whereaway?"

"On the lee-bow, sir." And, a little after, the look-out added, "there's some person on board, sir. I see a heap, as of white clothes, sir, at the foot of the mast: a woman's dress it is, sir."

At this announcement Crawford himself ascended to the top, carrying with him a glass. He did not long remain aloft, but hurried down in agitation.

"Good God," he said, "it is the wreck of the letter-of-marque in which Mr. Harold sailed. I recognized the craft at once."

"And the lady?"

"It must be Florence, or rather," he added, with a voice and look of agony, "her corpse. Not another living being is on the decks."

The instinct of the lover had recognized Florence at once, in that mass of white drapery at the foot of the mast, where the hapless girl had sunk, momentarily expecting the ship to go down.

The course of the man-of-war had been directed toward the wreck, as soon as the latter was made out; but now every stitch of canvass, that could draw, was also spread. Thus propelled, the huge vessel drove rapidly toward the merchantman, driving a cataract of foam before her bows.

The anxiety of Crawford, during the interval that now elapsed, was beyond adequate description. He could scarcely hope that Florence lived. So many hours had passed since the storm abated, that he could only look for the sad pleasure of beholding her inanimate face once more, preparatory to bidding it farewell forever.

He walked the deck in an agony of suspense indescribable, never, for a moment, removing his eyes from the wreck. And as the man-of-war approached it, yet still that recumbent form exhibited no signs of life, his anguish became almost intolerable.

When the ship was hove-to, he was the first to leap into the boat, of which he took command; and the light gig had scarcely touched the wreck before he had sprung on board.

"Florence, Florence," he cried, madly, raising the senseless form in his arms; and straining her to his bosom with one muscular arm, with the

other he pushed back the wet hair from her brow. "Florence, you are not dead, you cannot be dead."

The head fell heavily back against his shoulder.

"She is dead," said the surgeon, who had accompanied him.

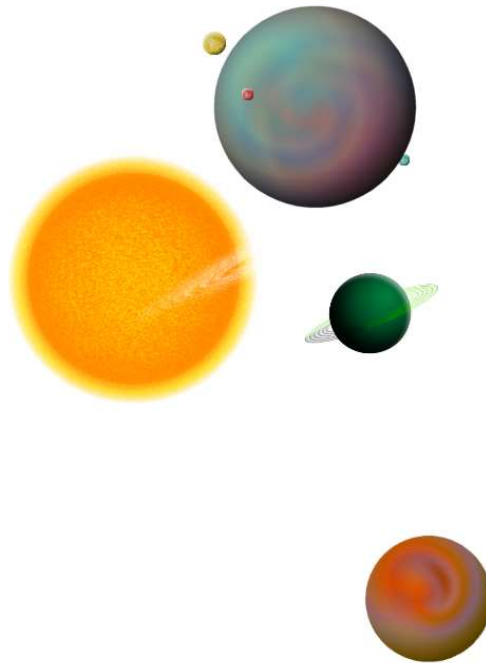
But as he spoke, a faint sigh parted the lips of the fair girl, and opening her eyes she gazed bewildered around.

"No, she lives," cried Crawford, "thank God she lives!" And tears of over-wrought emotion burst from him.

Yes! she lived, though weak and exhausted. Almost by a miracle the letter-of-marque, after settling nearly to the water's edge, had remained

stationary, her cargo being too light to suffer her to sink. Florence had continued insensible where she fell, drenched occasionally with the surges, but still living. Yet it was fortunate she was rescued thus early, for a few more hours of such exposure would have forever broken the golden bowl at the fountain.

What more have we tell? Snatched from death so unexpectedly, Florence was full of gratitude to heaven. This thankfulness fortunately tempered a grief that would otherwise have been too excessive. Still she wept long for the departed. For more than a year she continued to wear mourning, but, at the end of that period, gave her hand to Crawford.



THE WIDOWER; OR, LEAVES FROM AN OLD MAID'S JOURNAL.

BY ELLA RODMAN.

TUESDAY, February 8th.—Those noisy children of Wilbanks', they are enough to drive one crazy! Here they are, hours before decent people think of leaving their beds, up and screaming at the top of their lungs, racing about the yard like mad things, and making all sorts of unmeaning noises, just to see which can scream the loudest. It is really annoying to have such neighbors—now I hear a window raised, and there is a call of—"Saunders! Saunders! Keep off of those flower-beds!" That is Mrs. Wilbank—I know her hearty, cheerful voice. The deluded woman actually considers her children wonders, and that silly man, her husband, takes more pleasure in their society than in any other that could be offered. All this does well enough, if they did not require others to entertain the same opinion; but if one goes in there for a call, that everlasting baby is sure to make its appearance in Mrs. Wilbank's arms, who informs you with the most perfect composure, that "when she left the child with its nurse it screamed all the time—but now she always brings it in the room with her, so that she feels perfectly easy." "*Easy*" indeed! The Indian war-whoop would be a gentle lullaby compared to the strains which greet the ears of her visitors. Thank my fortunate stars! that I'm not married.

To-day is my birth-day. My thirty years seem like a dream over which I glance in vain for any era of signal importance; the seasons have come and gone, and on each succeeding birth-day I remember thinking how old I should feel the next year—but now I am thirty, and I do not feel so very old yet. It seems a very short time since I was eighteen; how well I remember the day! I was cracking nuts with my teeth, and mother remonstrated against the practice. "If you do so," said she, "you will not have a tooth in your head by the time you are thirty." "*Thirty!*" how I did laugh! What should I want of teeth, or anything else, at *thirty*? And yet here I am, at that sober, matter-of-fact age, with quite as much use for my teeth as ever I had.

I almost dread going down to breakfast this morning; Edward and Cora will be sure to banter me on being an old maid, for at thirty one cannot very easily shake off the title. Very saucy of Cora—she is two whole years older than I am, and yet she really seems to feel younger. There

actually is something quite pleasant and independent in being an old maid, but it is very provoking to be called one. People seem to regard them as targets to be aimed at with impunity; and Edward, even last night, with such a saucy look in those bright eyes of his, and a sly glance at Cora, read from the newspaper an insolent toast, given somewhere among a party of rowdies, "our fire-engines—may they be like old maids: ever ready, but never wanted!" "Ever ready" indeed!

That is Alice's knock. "Get up, Aunt Maggy! breakfast is ready, and this is your birth-day, you know." Oh, yes! of course they will not forget my birth-day—why can they not let it rest in peace? When a child I longed in vain for birth-day celebrations—they passed quite as unnoticed as other days; but now the honors fall rather heavily upon me. I never was a beauty, and I must now be still less so than formerly, but, to my great joy, not a single grey hair is visible. I almost closed my eyes during the search, for fear of beholding what I did not wish to see; but a closer inspection convinces me that my fears were unfounded. That reminds me of a most uncomplimentary speech, of which, as usual, I was the unfortunate recipient; but I really hate to put it down on paper. It was last Wednesday, when I was at the hair-dresser's; and after expressing my fears that my hair would turn grey early, as that of most of our family had done, the woman innocently exclaimed—"dear me, ma'am! you couldn't have everything bad!" Rather a poor consolation, and more abrupt than pleasing; but one comfort, I had a cold in my head then, and I defy any one to be beautiful with that most tormenting of all afflictions—my usual complaint, by the way. Now a cough makes one appear rather interesting, but who can feel pity for a cold in the head?

I need not have lingered so long before the glass, and have been so particular to arrange everything to the best advantage—what if I am thirty? They all saw me last night, and no material change can have taken place since then.

After breakfast. The Rubicon is passed! After an affectionate kissing all around, I took my seat at the table, and began to feel more at my ease. But on venturing to speak of those noisy little

Wilbanks', Cora looked mischievous, and that intolerable Edward exclaimed:

"Take care, Margaret! You remember the saying about bachelors' wives and old maids' children?"

They both laughed; while I bit my lips and remained silent.

We were sitting around the fire afterward; and I asked Cora if she did not feel very old?

"'Old' indeed!" she exclaimed, "no, I feel quite as young as ever I did."

"I suppose she will be asking me next if I do not feel very old," observed Edward, "I'll tell you what it is, Maggy, you are ten years older than either of us. You can no longer be called a chicken, can you?"

I had never experienced the least desire to be termed a chicken before; but I now felt quite melancholy that they would not acknowledge me as such.

When one lives with a married sister, she is somewhat of a cipher with respect to household affairs; and having nothing of that kind to detain me below, I hastened to my own snug little room to collect my thoughts properly for my thirtieth birth-day. A beautiful volume of Byron from Edward, the tiniest of watches from Cora, and a very pretty toilet-cushion, manufactured by the dimpled hands of little Alice, are lying on my dressing-table. It is pleasant to be so remembered, and they *are* very kind, if they only were not such dreadful teases!

I have been engaged in the melancholy occupation of looking over old letters. There are piles of them in my desk, and I have several times thought of burning them; but my hand has been withheld in the very act, by a reluctance to part with such speaking mementoes of the past, and thus destroy forever all evidences of former kindness from those whose lips have since learned to frame far different words. I have just commenced journal-keeping to-day; in my quiet life there will not be much worth recording, but I am writing for myself, and it is something of an amusement. I intend always to keep up the practice; years hence I can look back to this record of other days, and it will be like the magician's wand to bring the past vividly before me.

I was just thinking that I had never received an offer; nor do I remember ever to have fallen in love since my tenth year. I then bestowed my warm affections on a little boy in a red jacket and gilt buttons, who evidently regarded me with considerable favor. But one unlucky day, by an ill-timed stroke of wit, I lost my youthful admirer. This red jacket was his pet passion; I knew this, and in the midst of some trifling dispute, I informed him that "monkeys always wore red jackets." I could not have inflicted a

deeper wound; his jacket was laid aside—and so was I.

My tongue did me considerable mischief on several occasions. Many years later, when I began to feel less youthful than formerly, I came very near making a conquest. Having met with a bashful young man in company, I pitied his embarrassment, and exerted myself to relieve it. For several successive evenings he followed me about, and seemed to consider me as a sort of protector. But a group of mischievous girls, just released from the school-room, were quite amused with this sudden friendship; and with the determination of bringing matters to a crisis, they repeated several compliments which had been paid me by my admirer. They perceived that these speeches were by no means disagreeable, and professed themselves surprised and delighted with my powers of pleasing; at the same time begging me to divulge the secret to them. This flattered my vanity; and puffed up with self-complacency, I replied, "the secret, girls, is this: if you wish to be particularly agreeable to a person, converse with him on subjects where he is most at home; he is much better pleased to think himself sensible than you." They listened with the utmost gravity, as though to the words of an oracle; and, the first chance they obtained, informed my new acquaintance of these sentiments. He was frightened at the idea of being managed, and studiously avoided me. Supposing his bashfulness to be stronger than ever, I noticed him more than usual—but in vain; I could not draw him into conversation. I felt rather mortified, as I was quite unconscious of having given offence; but I experienced no deeper feeling at his departure, and certainly learned something by it; namely, to keep my own counsel, and not let my vanity get the better of my prudence.

I shall not make any calls to-day; it would seem as though every one I met knew that it was my thirtieth birth-day; and besides, it is bitter cold, and almost too much trouble to get out one's furs and put them away again; and consideration the third, as I am now an old maid, I think I shall give up writing, and devote myself to the improvement of my mind. So, Mrs. Cora, you will be obliged to set forth alone—I cannot leave my coal-fire.

Now the first question is, what can I do to signalize myself? I always had an ardent desire to be something above the common herd, but never could make it out. Manufacturing clothes for poor children is benevolent, to be sure, but I do not think I should like it; and now that youth has departed, I would aspire to fame of some description. Perhaps I might write a novel, if I could accomplish a beginning, middle, and end; but then I have no patience with lovers, and I

could not very well do without them. I shall stop journalizing, and read over my Byron.

Night. I am almost ashamed to sum up this account of my birth-day—it has been so unprofitably spent. After poring over a book, which I had read two or three times, until late in the afternoon, I began to dress for dinner; and on descending to the parlor, I was scrutinized from top to toe by my provoking brother-in-law, who apologized by saying that he did not know me, for I really looked *pretty*! It certainly was a compliment, clumsily as he expressed it, and almost the only one that I ever received. Women are silly after all, (not but what men are much more so) for here was I, at the age of thirty, believing all his flattery.

There is to be a sort of variation in our quiet life; Edward talks a great deal of a Mr. Claybrook, a widower, and an old friend of his, whom he has not seen for several years until to-day; but having just arrived from the West Indies, he will probably honor us with his company very often. From what Edward says, this gentleman appears to be quite a hero of romance; and I feel considerable curiosity to behold him. To begin with: he is very handsome, wealthy, and unfortunate. Noble-minded he must be, if one can judge from actions, for he was the best of sons to a widowed mother; and at her death he went to Cuba to make a fortune, and there married a beautiful creature who almost tormented his life out. This Blanche was head-strong, selfish, and passionate; he denied her nothing that could be given with any degree of propriety—but one day, on his refusing to grant a most unreasonable request, she threw herself into the water, in a fit of passion, and he plunged in after her. It was sometime before he could succeed in grasping her; and then, quite wearied out with his exertion, he supported himself and her until a boat reached them. They used every means to restore her, but in vain; his beautiful wife was a corpse, and his left arm has been entirely useless ever since. Wayward as she was, he felt his wife's loss deeply, for he really loved her, and has since remained a widower. This I have gathered from Edward, and his description seems quite perfect.

What nonsense I have written! What is it to me whether he is unfortunate or not? There are plenty of other unfortunate men in the world; and what to me are the concerns of my brother-in-law's visitors? I have certainly been more foolish on this my thirtieth birth-day than I ever remember to have been in my whole life before. This journal-keeping is a very good thing; it shows one every silly thought and action in a much stronger light than they otherwise appear.

February 12th.—I have not written in my journal for several days. I could not seem to

find time, for my wardrobe appeared to demand so much attention that it has kept me constantly busy. All of a sudden I find myself most remarkably destitute of clothes, and shopping is an occupation that consumes a great deal of time. Cora has persuaded me into a very foolish thing; a white hat and feathers for a single woman of my age is very much too dressy; but after I had once tried it on my head she would not allow me to take it off—she said that it was the most becoming thing I had ever put on. I took it; but I could not help thinking of Mrs. Cleopatra Skewerton, in “*Dombey and Son*,” and wondered if I did not resemble her.

It is very pleasant to have people paying you compliments, even though you do not believe them (and I certainly do not.) Edward wonders if I am not growing prettier, or whether I dress more becomingly than I did. Well, I really believe that I have done up my hair! How could I be so foolish as to torture myself with curl-papers? Mr. Claybrook is coming here next week—probably to take tea and spend the evening.

Monday 14th.—Here, in my own little room, I can at length draw a long breath. I know of nothing more applicatory to my feelings than a couple of lines, which are constantly in my mind, but I forget where I have seen them.

“And woe is me!” the Baillie cried,
“That I should see this day!”

We expected Mr. Claybrook, to be sure, but had quite made up our minds that he would not come till evening. It was about four o'clock, and we were seated at the dinner-table in the back parlor. I had been very much occupied all day, and while making my toilet for dinner, the bell rang before I had concluded; I therefore went down with my hair in papers—also, for greater beauty, retaining my morning wrapper. This was bad enough, but not the worst: I had just begun to recover from the effects of a very hot pickle, and my eyes and nose were of the color which my cheeks should have been; this, with the tears which were quite visible, gave me the appearance of having just been crying—when the door was thrown open, and Mr. Claybrook announced!

For a moment I sat quite stunned, and heard him say, “the servant told me that you were at dinner, but using the privilege of an old friend, I followed him in here.” If people were only aware of the annoyance they cause when they “use the privilege of old friends” and “will not stand upon ceremony!” “You did perfectly right,” said my brother-in-law; while I thought he had done perfectly wrong. So much for first appearances.

How ridiculous and disappointing it is to

picture from description the appearance of some individual whom you have never seen, and how provoking of him to look totally different. My Mr. Claybrook, and Edward's Mr. Claybrook are two distinct and separate personages. I had fancied a gentleman of about six feet high, with very dark hair, very dark eyes, and bronzed complexion; a pensive countenance, and beautiful mouth, that rarely smiled, but when it did so far relax, white, shining teeth gleamed out like rows of pearls. His appearance was to be extremely stylish, with a certain "keep-your-distance" kind of air; and every word he uttered was to be characterized by rare intelligence, refinement, and brilliancy. Now for what he is. When I had at length mustered sufficient boldness to raise my eyes, I beheld a well-dressed gentleman of middle height, with his left arm in a sling, which gave him rather an interesting appearance—though he had by no means the half-bandit look I had pictured, and his hair and eyes were not near so dark; but one comfort, they were not blue—I am so tired of blue-eyed people. So that I have seen Mr. Claybrook, and he has seen me.

In an agony of fear, I motioned to Edward and Cora not to introduce me, and as soon as possible slipped from the room and gained my own quiet dormitory. I made my toilet as I had originally intended it, and hastened back again—but he was gone. Edward says that he staid but a short time; and it will probably be long before we see him again, as he is going immediately to Washington on business. So ends this day of misfortunes.

Edward and Cora have been laughing both at me and Mr. Claybrook. They insist that we were both struck dumb with intense admiration of each other; and they try to persuade me that I looked much worse than I really did. The worst that Mr. Claybrook can say or think is that he saw an old maid, in morning-gown and curl-papers, seated at the dinner-table crying. It certainly was no fault of mine, and perhaps he did not even look at me after all. I do not believe he would remember me if he saw me again.

Cora ought to be ashamed of herself; she laughs at his carrying his arm in a sling, and says that it is ridiculous for an injury received so long since. I am sure that it looks much better than if it hung powerless at his side; but she ridicules the idea of his having but one arm altogether. I remonstrated with her on this unfeeling conduct, and grew so warm in his defence, that before long their ridicule was turned upon me. I cannot hear the absent abused; and above all, one who brought this deformity upon himself by his courage and self-sacrifice in behalf

of another, and that other so unworthy. For my part, I think it makes him appear more interesting, and so I told them; but they pelted me so unmercifully with ridicule and laughter that I was forced to make a hasty retreat.

March 13th.—Well, I really am surprised. Having put on the white hat and feathers, and everything to correspond, I sallied forth with Cora for an aimless stroll. As we sauntered leisurely along, we encountered Mr. Claybrook, proceeding in an opposite direction, who immediately stopped on seeing us; and after paying his respects to Cora, was formally introduced to me, whom he honored with an exquisite bow and a beaming smile. What a difference there is in bows!—from the awkward nod to that graceful lifting of the hat, which Mr. Claybrook executes to perfection. I should sooner have expected to meet almost any one else than him, but he told us that he returned sooner than he intended; and although a surprise, it has certainly been a more agreeable one than the dinner-table scene. Mr. Claybrook walked some distance with us, and promised to call very soon. Since our return Cora has been trying to persuade me that I really am a beauty; and says that there is no knowing what that hat and feathers may yet accomplish. What a very silly speech! and how much more silly of me to put it down.

March 20th.—Mr. Claybrook has been here again; and this time I looked more like a lady. He is certainly a very intellectual man, and a very entertaining one. He has so many amusing stories to relate—no one ever did meet with such adventures before; but I must confess that I am disappointed not to find the half-melancholy countenance and pensive manner I had pictured. It is so provoking to have in one's mind a certain standard of perfection, and then find yourself drawn in to admire a totally different style. My beau-ideal of manly beauty was seven feet high, with breadth in proportion—though I am rather undersized myself; but now I begin to think that such a figure might be clumsy, and very much in the way.

It is strange, to be sure, but I seem to have had Mr. Claybrook very much to myself this evening. Mr. Pelman called in, and Cora seemed to occupy herself entirely with him, only putting in a word now and then; while Mr. Claybrook, Edward, and I formed a coterie of ourselves. Life in the West Indies must be very beautiful according to his description, but I do not think I should like the heat, and the slaves, and the insects; to say nothing of snakes—my mortal horror and aversion. But then it is always summer there, and the perfume of the orange blossoms through open windows must be perfectly delightful. Discovering my fondness for

flowers, Mr. Claybrook has promised to bring me some seed of a beautiful West Indian plant that blooms but once in two years. I should like to have it, but he will probably forget all about it; people, that is, people whom I have met with, are so apt to promise things and never bring them; and I am not one of that lucky class who are always receiving presents.

March 21st.—It is very strange that they will not let me alone—they appear to delight in teasing me. I cannot converse with a gentleman for a single evening, without their saying all sorts of absurd things. Even Mr. Claybrook they appear to consider a fit subject for mirth; and Edward says so provokingly,

"Why, Maggy, you and Mr. Claybrook appear to suit each other exactly. It is a very good speculation, I can assure—you had better set your cap for him."

"*'Set my cap for him'* indeed!" I replied, indignantly, "a man's love that comes not without seeking is not worth having; and such a speech is particularly foolish to me, for an old maid I am, and an old maid I intend to remain."

"Old maids are not apt to be quite so sentimental," said Cora, laughing. "But what will you bet," she exclaimed, suddenly, "that the end of the year, or your next birth-day, will find you an old maid still? I will wager half a dozen pair of gloves that before then you will be obliged to lay aside all claim to the title."

"Very well," said I, "I will accept your offer, for half a dozen pair of gloves will not come amiss, and I wish to punish you for your absurd remarks."

They have really made me feel unpleasant. Perhaps Mr. Claybrook too thinks that I have exerted myself to be agreeable—that I am trying to *catch* him; far superior as he seems to others I have seen, he is a man, and men are so notoriously conceited. The idea overwhelms me with mortification; perhaps I *have* been too forward, and ready to agree with everything he said, and he may even now regard me with contempt. The next time he comes I will let him see that I can entertain opinions separate from his; I will treat him coldly and politely, or else have a regular dispute. It is very disagreeable though to quarrel with people—I wish that Edward and Cora would let me alone.

March 25th.—I should now be quite at ease with respect to my dignity; I have succeeded in making myself as disagreeable as possible. My conscience rather smote me when Mr. Claybrook produced the seeds so promptly; but, after all, what do a few seeds amount to? He may have brought them just to lead me on to make a fool of myself. I was extremely distant, and opposed almost everything he said. I thought that he

once or twice looked rather surprised, as well he might at conduct so different from my former manner; but one piece of actual rudeness, of which I was guilty, has really made me feel ashamed of myself. It was all Cora's fault—she is always leading me into some scrape of that sort. She made a direct attack upon me, before Mr. Claybrook, by asking me if I did not like to see a large ring on a gentleman's finger. She had just expressed herself delighted with a magnificent diamond worn by Mr. Claybrook on his little finger—the only thing about him which I can condemn; and, although quite aware of my sentiments, she applied to me as though confident of my assent. I felt myself turning all manner of colors, and pretended not to hear her question; but she repeated it in a louder tone, and I was forced to say,

"You know that I do not, Cora—but that is no rule for others."

"Oh, yes," observed Mr. Claybrook, with a smile, "every one's opinion is of consequence. But, Miss Earleton," he continued, "you must be kind enough to give us your reasons; perhaps you will convince us all."

What could I say? How extricate myself from the dilemma in which they had involved me? It was really cruel for poor unoffending me to be led into such a scrape; but an answer was expected, and some reason must be given. I do not think I ever uttered but one falsehood; and although a child, the lesson I then received inspired me with such a contempt for it—it seemed to me something so mean and despicable—that I could scarcely tell another to save my life. Even white lies, lies of politeness which people constantly indulge in, I could not bring myself to commit; and now, when asked the why and wherefore, my reply was more truthful than courteous.

"You must excuse me, Mr. Claybrook," said I, "and remember that I did not seek the argument—I was drawn into it; my reason for disliking to see rings worn by gentlemen is that to me they have a finical and foppish appearance. But there are probably few who coincide with me; and my opinion, of course, cannot be of the least importance to you."

There is something rather odd about him, which I cannot quite understand; instead of saying that my opinion *was* of importance, or anything of the kind, he repeated the word "foppish," and seemed to fall into a reverie. Nothing more passed between us during the evening; but Cora has just told me that after observing me for some time, he remarked to her that there was something very noble and truthful in my countenance, and that I appeared to be quite above the meanness of descending

to falsehood or equivocation, even in the most trifling things. I understand your irony, my good sir; and though I cannot blame you for it after my rudeness, I am by no means so foolish as to believe it to be intended for a compliment.

All the satisfaction that I obtained from Cora, for her troublesome question, was that she wished to see what I would say, and what he would say. A laudable curiosity!

March 30th.—I scarcely know what to think of Mr. Claybrook; whether, to use a vulgar expression, he is "making game of me," or if he really admires my bluntness as much as he professes to. He came up to me this evening with a smile, as he said,

"I have reflected on the subject of rings, Miss Earleton, and now confess myself very much of your manner of thinking. It is a trifle, to be sure, but people should be particular even in trifles. The diamond is now at the jeweler's, where I have left it to be re-set for a lady to whom I intend making it a present, if she will honor me by accepting it."

It was very foolish of me, but I wished that he had not told me that. I wonder who the lady is? Some one young and beautiful, I suppose. Heigho!

It is certainly very singular, and provoking too, for I am sure it is no fault of mine, but my conversation with Mr. Claybrook appears now to be one continual dispute. I do not know how it is, but, before I am in the least aware of it, he has drawn me into a controversy, during which I am compelled to say many rude things for the sake of truth. He contrives to draw forth my sentiments and opinions, without enlightening me as to his, which seems hardly fair dealing; but I begin to be very much interested in him—he is so odd and different from other men that I even look forward to our disputes with a degree of pleasure. I really need Edward and Cora to restore me to my senses, provoking as they are.

"Well," exclaims my brother-in-law, "this certainly is the most curious courtship I ever beheld! Here are Mr. Claybrook and Maggy, delighted with each other, yet quarrelling every time they meet, and really unhappy if a civil word chances to pass between them."

"All's well that ends well," observed Cora, sagely, "and Maggy seems to have hit upon the very method most likely to captivate her incomprehensible West Indian."

There it is again; perhaps he really thinks I quarrel on purpose to please him! The troublesome man! I wish he was—*here*. Now, Margaret Earleton, you are the most ridiculous old maid that ever arrived at the unromantic age of thirty. Look in the glass, and tell me what you see. You behold a face that does, to be sure,

look about as well as ever it did; but in its best estate it is not one likely to do much in the way of captivation. Add to this a manner rude, quarrelsome, and repelling, and then bring up Mr. Claybrook in all his attractions, and ask yourself if you have not lost your reason—if indeed you ever possessed any.

April 3rd.—We have not quarrelled this evening. I do not know why it is, but I feel quite melancholy; and yet it is not a dark, overburdening melancholy—only a pleasant sadness. Mr. Claybrook has been repeating to me passages of his former life; tears stood in his eyes when he spoke of his beautiful wife, and his tone was sad as he said,

"The great fault in her character was *want of truth*; I loved her deeply, fondly, but I could not trust her simplicity—I could not *depend* upon her. There are few, besides yourself, Miss Earleton, to whom I should speak so freely; but you possess the jewel which my poor Blanche lacked—you are truth itself."

Old as I am, I blushed deeply, and Mr. Claybrook fixed his eyes upon me with a penetrating expression that disconcerted me still more. I wish he would not stare so—it is quite a habit with him.

April 20th.—Mr. Claybrook has not been here for a long time. They told me that I had frightened him away with my quarrelsome temper, and I believed them; but I now hold in my hand a small packet that makes me tremble with a pleasant kind of fear. We were all commenting upon his prolonged absence, when the parcel was brought in; and on reading the superscription, they handed it to me. I have not opened it yet—I *dare* not; but Edward says that it is Mr. Claybrook's handwriting; and both he and Cora looked so knowing and mischievous that I was glad to make my escape as soon as possible.

I have opened it. Out rolled a glittering ring, and I recognized the splendid diamond which had occasioned my first rude speech. I thought that there might be another Margaret Earleton, and laughed at the idea of appropriating it to myself; but I read the letter, and impossible as it seemed, became convinced that it was really me. Thus runs the letter:

"I have sent the ring—for it was that very evening that I first became fascinated by the unswerving truth which has characterized your every word and action. I have watched you narrowly when you least supposed it; I have drawn you into argument, and tried both temper and principle; I have held the jewel in various lights, but it remains pure and faultless. I have passed my time in solitude—have examined my own heart, and became satisfied. I now ask you, dear M—, to accompany me on my pilgrimage



through life, and await my answer from the lips of truth."

What can I say? Cora has just read the letter, and to her I repeated the question.

"What can you say?" she replied, gravely, "why, tell him, of course, that such a thing is altogether out of the question—that you cannot call to mind any conduct of yours which could lead him to entertain such erroneous ideas—that you shall always esteem him as a friend, and all that sort of thing, but you find yourself under the necessity of declining his obliging offer."

But *do* I? They will certainly laugh at me if I write an assent, but what do I care? I am not the first person who has done such a thing. Cora adds in a tone of concern, that "it is a pity to give up the ring." Not so much so as to give up—

June 1st.—That ever I should live to write this! *It is my wedding-day!* I am attired in bridal robes, but I have snatched a few moments to complete my journal. It is the first day of

summer, and far more lovely than summer ever yet appeared. The trees wear that fresh, beautiful green that hangs in such delicate sprays from every bough—the birds are raising a complete concert in my ears, and the sky beams brightly with the hue of faith. The little Wilbanks are making more noise than ever, but even their voices are music to-day. Beautiful, blessed is it to live but for the loved one!—to be always near him, ever at his side with a mission of love—to feel the beating heart—response to those solemn words, "until death do us part."

Cora has claimed her gloves already, and I fulfilled my wager most honorably. I am laughing at my former idea of continuing this journal-keeping through life; I do not feel as much interested in it as formerly. But what shall I do with these stray leaves? I shrink from the idea of appearing in print, but it is a duty I owe the public; I would diffuse my happiness around; therefore let them laugh and be merry over this record of an old maid's folly.



SUSAN DALE.
A STORY OF NEW ENGLAND.

BY CAROLINE ORNE.

It was an evening in March, just cool enough to make the fire look cheerful and attractive, as its ruddy blaze lighted up the large, old-fashioned kitchen of a farm-house in an obscure town in the interior of New England. Mr. Dale, a hardy, robust-looking man, a little past the prime of life, was seated near one corner of the fire-place, in a large, comfortable-looking arm-chair. Strong, energetic and healthful as he was, the severe toil of the day had produced a lassitude, which unfitted him for the enjoyment of the quiet and simple pleasures of the domestic circle, and leaning his elbow on an arm of the chair, with his eyes half closed, he rested his head on his hand.

Mrs. Dale, a good-looking, intelligent woman, with a benignity which manifested itself not only in her countenance, but in her whole deportment, and which her friends and neighbors were wont to designate by the word "motherly," sat in the opposite corner, diligently plying her knitting-needles.

A small table stood in front of the fire-place, at one side of which sat Susan Dale, repairing her father's best coat; a task, which requiring care and attention, she insisted on doing in order to relieve her mother. Susan was by no means a beauty, yet there was something in her bright, beaming face, and her modest, unassuming demeanor, which had the power of drawing toward her the hearts of the good, and of cheering those who were sorrowful. The eyes of Susan often glanced with a look of solicitude toward her brother, who sat at the same table with a pen in his hand, and a sheet of paper spread before him, partly written over. Mrs. Dale too often looked anxiously toward her son.

Edwin Dale was sixteen, two years younger than Susan, and now, after sitting all day on a shoe-maker's bench, was jotting down on paper a few of the iris-hued fancies which had solaced him during his toilsome task. His hand was resting on the paper, as Susan was once more regarding him, and while a smile hovered on his lips, his fine hazle eyes grew more luminous. Suddenly he was seized with a fit of coughing, and dropping his pen, he pressed both hands against his right side.

"Why, Edwin," said Mr. Dale, at once roused from the partial state of somnolency into which

he had fallen, "you have got a new cold, haven't you?"

"You certainly have," said his mother.

"I hardly think I have," he replied, as soon as he was able to speak.

"I think your employment is injuring you," said Susan.

"I must do something," said he, smiling faintly, "and you know I cannot work on the farm."

A crutch which leaned against his chair, sufficiently indicated the reason why he was obliged to have recourse to employment which was sedentary.

"If your employment is injuring you, Edwin," said Mr. Dale, earnestly, "you shall not work at it another hour. I have as yet strong hands and a willing mind; and though my limbs are a little stiff in the morning, owing to laboring so hard ever since I was ten years old, on this little hard rocky farm, by breakfast time I am limber as ever, and if the day does not prove long enough to enable me to maintain myself and family, I will borrow a piece of the night."

"You work a great deal too hard now," said Edwin. "I was in hopes to soon be able to earn so much that you would have the means to hire a day's work now and then."

"Don't give yourself a minute's uneasiness about that, my son. If my health and strength are spared me, there is a good living here on the farm for you and all of us."

Susan remained silent, apparently buried in thought.

"I feel almost well now," said Edwin. "The pain in my side is not at all bad except when I cough," and as he finished speaking he again took up his pen.

Beautiful thoughts came flowing in upon his mind, and bending over his paper, he wrote rapidly for half an hour.

"After all," said he, "I suppose what I have written would seem like nonsense to a person capable of judging."

This was said in a half audible voice to himself rather than to those around him, and at the same time he opened the drawer of the table, and in it placed the written sheet. Soon afterward, he retired to his sleeping apartment.

The moment he had left the room, Susan said, "how I wish that Edwin was not obliged to work at shoe-making, but could have his time to write and study."

"Why your Aunt Sally says, that he would die of a consumption in less than six months, if he had leisure to write and study as much as he wishes to," said Mrs. Dale.

"Aunt Sally never wants to see a person do anything but work," said Susan.

"No," said Mr. Dale. "Sister is a great worker herself, and thinks others can do as much as she can."

"I have been thinking of a nice plan," said Susan, "if you and mother will only consent to it."

"What is it daughter?" said Mr. Dale.

"I have been thinking if I should go to the factory, that I could earn enough to make it unnecessary for Edwin to work any longer at his trade."

"Why, daughter, your mother couldn't do without you a single week, and, to confess the truth, I guess I should find it pretty hard. I am afraid your mother would have no heart to work, if you were gone—should you, mother?"

"It would certainly be a great trial to me to have her go away," replied Mrs. Dale.

"And it would be hard for me to leave you and father, and Edwin, and little Fanny. But mother will not be so very lonely if I should go, for Edwin, if he can study, instead of working at shoe-making, will be in the house a great part of the time, and then even the sound of little Fanny's voice is enough to cheer any one, it is so sweet and musical. Jane Mercer earns three dollars a week, and if I am well, I shall soon be able to earn as much as she does."

"And after all," said Mrs. Dale, "it might be of no use as far as Edwin is concerned. I never saw him look so pale as he did this evening. I am afraid that he is already in a settled decline."

"I should be afraid so too," said Susan, "judging by appearances; but Dr. Orford says that his disease is not pulmonary, and that by proper care and plenty of exercise in the open air, his health may be restored. Now this cannot be done unless I go to the factory. There is no way by which I can earn anything of consequence if I remain here; and if father's burden is increased, he will break down under it. Father—mother, you must let me go."

"Well, daughter," said Mr. Dale, "if your mother will consent, I suppose I must."

"I must have time to think of it," said Mrs. Dale. "To part with Susan, and to know that she will have no one to speak to except strangers is no light matter, and cannot be decided on at once."

Dr. Orford having been formally consulted re-

lative to Edwin's case, strictly prohibited him from working any longer at his trade. "If he persisted," he said, "he probably would not live a year." It was, therefore, decided that Susan should go to the factory, a step which gave Edwin more pain than any member of the family, as the sacrifice of home and its comforts was to be made on his account.

It was with considerable difficulty that money enough was procured to pay her travelling expenses. Lowell was the place where she had decided to go, which, though over a hundred miles distant, was at that time as near her home as any of the manufacturing towns.

When after accomplishing a part of her journey, she took her place in the cars which were to convey her to her place of destination, it happened to be by the side of a woman whose first care was to examine Susan's countenance, her next, the different articles of her dress. This being accomplished to her satisfaction, she said, "I kind of mistrust that you are going to the factory to work."

"I am," replied Susan.

"You've got a boarding-place engaged I suppose?"

"No, I have not—I have been advised to apply to the superintendent to select me one."

"Well, then, it's a lucky chance that you fell in with me, for I'm going right straight to my darter-in-law's, who keeps a first rate boarding-house. She is a widder, and her name is Farnsworth. My name is Letherby. I married again after Mr. Farnsworth died, and Moses Farnsworth, my oldest son, married Darcus Smith, and a better man for a living than Moses was never broke bread. He was one of your calc'ulating men, and knew how to take care of a dollar arter he had airnt it. Besides all that, he was one of the most ingeniosest creatures that ever lived—could turn his hand to anything, no matter what it was, and always could from a baby, as 'twere. As I've said before, he married Darcus Smith. Darcus was a good, smart girl as ever was, but she didn't make the calc'ulating woman that Moses did a man. I don't think that Moses would ever been dreadful rich, allowing he'd lived, if he'd continued to let Darcus have her own way as much as he had done."

"Perhaps Mrs. Farnsworth has as many boarders as she wishes," said Susan, the moment she found opportunity to speak.

"No she hasn't, I guess, and if she has, she shall take you. I took a fancy to you, the minute I sot eyes on you, and I'll make Darcus manage to make room for you somehow or other, so don't be a mite afraid."

"I should be sorry to discommode her," said Susan.

"La, don't you worry about that. Darcus is a widder and has a livin' to get, and such people mustn't calc'late to walk through the world with silver slippers on. They must expect to be on-commoded."

There was something in Mrs. Letherby's appearance so positive and overbearing, that Susan decided in her own mind to decline her invitation to go to Mrs. Farnsworth's. She thought it best to adhere to her intention of applying to the superintendent, who she had been told was a gentlemanly, obliging man, and would do the best he could to obtain her a good boarding-place.

The moment they arrived at the depot, Mrs. Letherby grasped her firmly by the arm.

"We must keep a sharp look out," said she, "or we shall get separated, there is such a pushing and crowding."

"I have come to the conclusion," said Susan, "to apply to the superintendent."

"You shall do no such thing. I told you Darcus should take you, and she shall, or my name isn't Jemima Letherby. I hope you don't think that I'm mean enough to tickle you up with the expectation that I'm going to do you a piece of sarvice, and then turn a cold shoulder on you. Come, let us go and see arter our baggage."

Susan found that it was no place to attempt resisting so determined a woman as Mrs. Letherby, and, therefore, for the time being, gave herself up to her direction.

When the hack which conveyed Susan and Mrs. Letherby, stopped before the house where resided Mrs. Farnsworth, a woman not more than twenty-five, and of a pleasing, modest appearance, came to the door.

"That's Darcus," said Mrs. Letherby to Susan, "and I declare, if she hasn't got on a gown good enough to go to meetin' in. I expect nothing but what she's by this time got pretty much through with poor Moses' airnings. It is a massy he didn't leave any children. Poor things, I don't know what would become of 'em if he had."

It appeared to Susan that the kind welcome which the young widow gave her mother-in-law was prompted by a sense of duty rather than by the spontaneous flow of pleasurable emotion. She even imagined that she detected a shade of uneasiness on her fair and open brow.

"I've picked you up a boarder by the way, Darcus," said Mrs. Letherby, lowering her voice as she stepped into the house. "Her name is Susan Dale. She is a pretty sort of a girl, and will make a first rate boarder, I'll warrant you."

Mrs. Farnsworth having conducted Mrs. Letherby and Susan into a neat, plainly-furnished parlor, and assisted them to divest themselves of their cloaks and bonnets, stepped into an

adjoining apartment, saying as she did so, "come this way a minute, mother, if you please."

"Mother," said she, as soon as they were by themselves, "it will be impossible for me to take Miss Dale—I have as many boarders as I can accommodate."

"But she's got my promise that you would take her."

"I should be very glad to if I could, for I am as much pleased with her appearance as you are. I will, at any rate, try and accommodate her to-night."

"But you've only twenty boarders, for while you were helping her off with her things, I took a look into the dining-room, and saw you'd got the table set for only twenty, and to my sartain knowledge, you've got beds enough for twenty-two—that is, if you haven't contrived to get rid of one of 'em since I was here."

"I have not disposed of any. I have another bed, but no where to put it."

"Now that's a likely story."

"The sleeping-rooms are too much crowded now."

"Well, girls that work in the mill and pay such low prices for board, must expect to be crowded. Pray tell me how many beds there are in the north chamber."

"Two."

"Only two? There is plenty of room for three. Come along, Darcus, and I'll help you set the other bed up, before the girls come home to tea."

"I don't think it will be right to put another bed in that room. It is small, and the girls wont have room to turn round."

"I'll risk their having room enough."

Mrs. Farnsworth still hesitated.

"Now, Darcus, I'll tell you what it is—you've got to airn your own living now—you haven't got poor Moses to airn it for you, and it's your duty not to leave a stone unturned." Tears came into the young widow's eyes.

"I am sure," said she, "I am willing to do all I can. It is no small task to take care of twenty boarders as they ought to be taken care of. I have already worked beyond my strength—my health has been failing several weeks."

"La, Darcus, how everlastin' spleeny* you are. I'll warrant you won't die before your time comes. If the truth could be known, I guess arter all you are more careful of yourself than you are of the boarders. Come—come along. That bed has got to go up, and the sooner we begin the better."

In the meantime, Susan, as she sat alone in the parlor, could not help feeling a little homesick.

* The word spleeny is used colloquially in New England to signify imaginary diseases.

But when her thoughts reverted to the object for which she sought a home amongst strangers, her heart grew strong, and she felt equal to meeting those troubles and annoyances, which in all probability she would be obliged to encounter. She was pleased with the appearance of Mrs. Farnsworth, and having, no doubt, by what Mrs. Letherby said, she would be willing to increase the number of her boarders, she dismissed all thoughts of applying to the superintendent. When, however, the supper hour arrived, and she saw from the window two or three girls arrive at a time, till she had counted twenty, she began to be afraid that there would be no room for her.

In a few minutes, Mrs. Farnsworth entered the parlor, and invited her to go into the dining-room to tea. When she entered, the girls had already taken their places at the table. When Mrs. Farnsworth introduced her, most of them acknowledged the introduction by a bow, though there were a few who took no notice of it. It was with some difficulty that Mrs. Farnsworth had so arranged as to reserve a place for her; twenty being as many as could be conveniently seated at the table. Susan saw this at a glance, which made her feel very uncomfortable: a feeling that was not ameliorated by seeing, as she took the chair indicated by the hostess, the girl at her right hand turn with a quick, impatient movement, so that her back, instead of her side was presented toward her.

After tea, most of the girls assembled in the parlor. Susan lingered in the dining-room, to speak to Mrs. Farnsworth, who had commenced clearing off the table.

"I am afraid," said she, "that I am considered an intruder. I was led to believe by what Mrs. Letherby said, that you would be glad to increase your number of boarders."

"To confess the truth, I have as many as I can accommodate, and I told mother so. I regret that it so happens, for I am certain that I should like you for a boarder."

"And I should like to remain were it convenient, though my impression was very different before I arrived. I have no expectation of finding a place that will suit me as well."

"You must, at any rate, remain to-night," said Mrs. Farnsworth, kindly. "It is too late now to look out a place."

The fire having died away, the room began to grow chilly, and Susan accepted an invitation from Mrs. Farnsworth to go into the parlor. On entering she found several of the girls engaged in sewing, some in reading, and others in study. It would have been difficult, perhaps, to have found twenty girls assembled together, who possessed more personal beauty, or who were

generally more intelligent. The truth was, the greater proportion of them were the daughters of farmers, who, though by their industry, they were able to maintain their families in plenty, found it difficult to turn their surplus produce into money. They, therefore, in many instances, could not afford to give their children a better education than could be obtained at the common district schools. Hence those of their daughters who were desirous of obtaining a knowledge of the higher branches of learning, as the readiest method of procuring funds for that purpose, worked a while in some factory. A number of those present had already been a year or more at some celebrated seminary, and had, in addition to the more solid branches, commenced studying the French language, and made considerable proficiency in drawing and music. Those who had a taste for the last mentioned art, had joined together and hired a piano, at which, by Mrs. Farnsworth's request, one of the girls seated herself, and accompanied her voice while she sang "The Last Rose of Summer," and the "Irish Emigrant's Lament," in a manner which would have done no discredit to one of higher pretensions.

Even those whose advantages as respected school education had been more limited, had enjoyed those of mingling freely with the best society within the reach of their retired homes.

While many of Mrs. Farnsworth's boarders were at work for the purpose of raising funds to enable them to attend school, there were others who were toiling for the support of a widowed mother, or an invalid brother or sister, or to aid a father to pay some debt which had long embarrassed him.

It was with a heavy heart that Susan, in the morning, prepared for her departure. Mrs. Farnsworth promised to let her know if any of her boarders should leave, in which case, if she did not prove so fortunate as to procure a boarding-place which suited her, she could return. She applied to the superintendent, who informed her that most of the houses were full, and that those, where there were vacancies, he was sorry to say, he could not very highly recommend. "There was in truth," he said, "but little to choose between any of them," and Susan, therefore, decided on going to a Mrs. Dillmore's, who, on being applied to, expressed herself willing to receive her.

When the dinner hour arrived, Susan proceeded to her new home. She found most of the boarders already there; some of them seated at the table, and others taking their places with a haste which she at first could not account for. By the time she had ascertained where she was to sit, several had finished their boiled halibut

and potatoes, which were served without butter, and commenced eating a baked rice pudding, which, by the remarks which were made, she found was as unlooked for as it was welcome.

"Come, Sally, where have you been?" said one, to a girl who was the last to arrive. "You'll lose your share of the pudding if you don't make haste."

"I would have been here sooner if I had known there was a pudding," said Sally, hurrying to the table. "For my part," she added, as she helped herself to a pretty liberal share, without as much as looking at the halibut, "I'm afraid that something dreadful is going to happen to Mrs. Dillmore."

"Why?" said one of the girls.

"I shouldn't think you need to ask why. The pudding, I should imagine, was answer enough. The struggle in her mind between policy and parsimony must have been tremendous—enough so to cause a fever, I should think."

"So should I," said another, "for 'tis a solemn fact, that of the twelve meals I have eaten since I came, eight of them have been of boiled halibut and potatoes, without a particle of butter, and the other four of cold, hasty pudding fried in fresh lard."

"If it goes on so much longer," said Sally, "I expect we shall be able to swim equal to fish, which may some day be the means of saving some of us from drowning."

Susan, from the first, resigned all idea of having a share of the pudding, of which long before she had finished a small bit of the halibut, every particle had disappeared.

Mrs. Dillmore had now, including Susan, eighteen boarders, and as many, she said, as she could accommodate. The room which Susan shared with five others was in the attic, and besides three beds, contained as many as a dozen trunks and band-boxes, the property of the occupants. In addition to these, there were two chairs, a table, and a broken looking-glass, so that whoever looked into it saw the reflection of three or four faces instead of one.

One tolerably good sized room answered the purposes of a kitchen, dining-room, and sitting-room. None of the girls, as was the case at Mrs. Farnsworth's, showed any signs of dissatisfaction at finding that Susan was to be added to their number. The truth was, none of them intended to make Mrs. Dillmore's anything more than a temporary residence. All were on the look-out for one more eligible. Mrs. Dillmore seldom retained the same set of boarders more than two or three weeks at a time. It gave her no uneasiness for them to leave, for wages being at that time so high as to attract as many as could find employment there, were a sufficient number

to supply all the boarding-houses. It, therefore, did not often happen that she was more than twenty-four hours without her full complement. Her object was to make money, and the poorer the table she kept, the sooner would her object be accomplished. What this or that one said of her being mean and stingy, troubled her not. When any dissatisfaction was expressed in her hearing, and there were those who were not very backward in doing it, she was in the habit of saying, "if you aint suited, you are at liberty to go as soon as you please. I can always have as many boarders as I want, and even if I couldn't, I thank my stars I'm not obliged to keep boarders for a living."

This want of urbanity on the part of the hostess was reciprocated with interest, by such as had in their own homes been strangers to those gentle and benign influences, which are sure in a greater or less degree to find their way to the heart.

Among Mrs. Dillmore's boarders there was one little pale, timid girl, not more than fourteen, who seemed to shrink from the companionship of those around her. On retiring to their room in the attic, Susan was pleased to find that she was to sleep with her. Her name was Annette Olney, and Susan subsequently found that she was the eldest of a large family of children, who were reduced to a state of extreme destitution by the intemperance of their father.

"I was very cold last night," said Annette. "There was only one thin quilt on the bed."

Susan, who on examination found that nothing had been added, supplied the deficiency with her warm thick cloak.

In the morning, when the girls assembled for their breakfast, they found placed in the centre of the table a six quart mill-pan, filled with pieces of dry baker's bread, on either side of which was a plate containing a small piece of rancid butter. These, with the addition of what Mrs. Dillmore called coffee, though containing not the slightest flavor of that fragrant beverage, constituted their meal.

"I shan't try to eat *this* butter," said one of the girls, after tasting it.

"Nor I—nor I," was the clamorous response of a dozen voices.

"Here, Annette Olney," said the girl who had first spoken, "take this cup and go to the pantry, and ask Mrs. Dillmore for some molasses."

Annette did not venture to refuse, though she complied with evident reluctance. She soon returned, saying that Mrs. Dillmore told her that "she couldn't afford butter and molasses too."

"We don't want but one," said several—"the butter isn't fit to eat."

"I'll get some, you see if I don't," said one of

them, rising quickly from the table, and taking the cup from Annette's hand.

Some words of altercation passed between her and Mrs. Dillmore, which ended in her obtaining half a cup full of molasses, which not being enough to go all around, was again carried to the pantry with similar success. While this scene was enacting, Susan could not banish from her mind the picture of her own pleasant home and its many comforts. The contrast caused a feeling of utter loneliness to come over her, such as mere solitude could not have produced. For a few minutes, so heavy was the weight upon her spirits as to overpower all wish for exertion. Then the wan face of her brother, with his deep, affectionate eyes, as they beamed on her at parting, rose up before her, and the words, "my dear, kind sister," pronounced in a voice made tremulous with emotion, seemed again murmured in her ear. They restored her to herself: her courage revived.

Several times, as Susan was passing from and to her boarding-house, she met a young man, who particularly attracted her attention from the resemblance, in many respects, between his countenance and her brother's. There was in both a look of great sweetness about the mouth, as if some fairy pencil had marked with light and delicate tracery an emblematical representation of the good and beautiful thoughts familiar to the mind. His eyes too, like Edwin's, were deep and luminous, and shaded by long, dark lashes. It was one of those accidental resemblances sometimes met with, and had the effect to draw toward him the heart of Susan, as if he had been an elder brother. At last to meet him became a pleasure dwelt on before-hand, and failing to do so, a real disappointment. Whether or no he ever noticed her she knew not. It was not probable that he ever did. She was not certain, however, as she never ventured more than a glance at his face as they passed each other. But that glance gave back to her for the moment her absent brother, and comforted her through the long and toilsome hours. It was a number of weeks before she even knew his name. One of the girls was with her one day, when she saw him turn the corner where she had learned to look for his appearance.

"There comes Horace Lee," said Amy Lakeman, the girl who was with Susan. "He is a lawyer by profession, though he is at present engaged in editing some work, and devotes a great part of his time to writing. He is soon going to be married to a Miss Lorimer, who is very rich. She is now in the place on a visit to Mrs. Damer, who is her sister. Mr. Damer, you know, is an English gentleman."

That part of Amy's information—Susan could

hardly tell why—which related to Horace Lee's anticipated marriage, seemed to fall on her heart like a blow, and when he drew near, without hardly knowing what she did, instead of the quick glance which she usually ventured, she looked him full in the face. Their eyes met, and as hers quickly fell beneath the beaming light of his, a vivid blush overspread her cheeks, and even her brow. After passing them, he looked back, as Amy discovered by doing the same.

"I wonder," said Amy, "whether Mr. Lee is looking back on your account or mine. I guess Miss Lorimer would be rather jealous if she knew that he had so much curiosity about us factory girls."

Susan made no reply, for she felt excited and annoyed at having been detected by Mrs. Lee in looking—or as she feared he would call it, staring at him. She felt nearly certain that she rather than Amy caused him to look back, and she had no doubt but that his curiosity was mingled with disgust at her apparent assurance.

Susan was so much troubled at what had taken place—trifling as it might seem—that when she arrived at her boarding-house and took her seat at the table, her appetite was entirely gone. She could scarce taste of the coarse viands provided for dinner. Amy Lakeman noticed this, and said to the girl who sat next to her, "only observe Susan Dale—she can't eat any dinner."

"What is the reason—do you know?"

"Why when we were coming home, we met Horace Lee, and as he looked at us a little, I suppose Susan thinks that she was the one who particularly attracted his attention, and that he is quite smitten with her beauty."

"She is vain enough to think a prince would fall in love with her, if one should happen to see her."

"What is that you are saying," said a girl, whose attention was excited by the magical phrase, "falling in love."

"Oh, nothing of consequence," said Amy. "I'll tell you after dinner, as we go back to the mill."

"I think," said Susan, who had partly overheard what was said, "that I can give you the best explanation. I have several times, of late, met a gentleman, whose name Amy told me to-day is Horace Lee. His striking resemblance to a dear and only brother, has caused me to particularly observe him. He probably noticed this, and as he could not know the reason, he without doubt imagined me very bold, which I confess makes me feel rather unpleasantly."

This explanation was received by some with a perceptible sneer, by others with a significant toss of the head, while there were several who

had the candor and generosity to believe that it was not her intention to disguise the truth.

Susan continued to meet Horace Lee as before, but as she uniformly kept her eyes bent to the ground, she could not by ocular demonstration tell whether he took any notice of her or not; yet by "some secret power of soul," if not of "eye," they seldom passed each other without her being sensible that his deep, earnest eyes were turned toward her. One day, as the girls left the mills to go to dinner, they saw that a dark, portentous-looking cloud was rapidly rising in the west. Those who boarded at the more distant houses, could hardly hope to reach them before the rain would commence. All made what haste they could.

Annette Olney could not walk as fast as the

others, and being much terrified by the vivid flashes of lightning, which were quickly succeeded by almost deafening peals of thunder. Susan drew her arm within Annette's, that she might both support and facilitate her progress. Yet they still remained considerably behind all the rest. Suddenly a strong gust of wind nearly raised them from their feet. A cloud of dust darkened the air, and then the rain began to descend in large, heavy drops. They were just in front of a large and splendid mansion, and Susan, finding that Annette was nearly exhausted, ascended the steps and pulled the bell. No one came. She then, though unsuccessfully, attempted to open the door. She returned to Annette, who had sunk down on the lower step, and attempted to raise her.

(TO BE CONCLUDED.)

